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A  
DISCOURSE

OF THE

Pastoral Care.

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Written by the Right Reverend Father in God,

GILBERT Lord Bishop of SARUM.

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Mali 5.  
1692.

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LONDON,

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TO THE  
QUEENS

Most Excellent MAJESTY.

May it please Your Majesty,

THE Title of *Defender of the Faith*, is so inherent in the Royal Dignity, and so essential a part of its security as well as of its glory, that there was no need of Papal Bulls to add it to the Crown that Your MAJESTY now wears: You hold it by a much better Tenure, as well as by a more ancient Possession. Nor can one reflect on the Pope's giving it to King *Henry the VIII<sup>th</sup>*, without remembring what is said of *Caiaphas*, that *being High Priest that year, he Prophefied*. For since that time, the true Faith hath been so eminently

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*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

nently Defended by our Princes, and that of both Sexes, we having had our *Pulcheria's* as well as our *Constantine's* and our *Theodose's*, that this Church has been all along the chief strength and honour of the Reformation, as well as the main Object of the envy and spite of those of the *Roman* Communion.

But tho Your MAJESTY'S Royal Ancestors have done so much for us, there remains yet a great deal to be done for the compleating of our Reformation, especially as to the Lives and Manners of men. This will most effectually be done by obliging the Clergy to be more exemplary in their Lives, and more diligent and faithful in the discharge of their Pastoral Duty. And this Work seems to be reserved for Your MAJESTIES, and designed to be the Felicity and Glory of Your Reign. To serve God by promoting this Great and Glorious Design, which is so truly worthy of Your MAJESTY'S best care and endeavours, I have purposely written this Treatise, which I do with all humility Dedicate and present to Your Sacred MAJESTY.

May

*The Epistle Dedicatory.*

— May that God who is the King of kings, and hath blest us with Two such Excellent Princes, preserve You Both long to us, and make You as happy in us, as we are in You: May You Reign over us till You have accomplished all those Great Designs for which God hath raised You up, and with which He hath filled Your Hearts: And may this Church be made by Your means *the Perfection of Beauty, and the Joy of the whole Earth.*

These are the daily and most fervent Prayers of,

*May it please Your MAJESTY,*

*Your MAJESTY'S*

*Most Loyal, most Humble, and most  
Obedient Subject and Chaplain,*

G. I. SARUM.

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T H E  
P R E F A C E.

**T**HIS Subject, how Important soever in it self, yet has been so little treated of, and will seem so severe in many parts of it, that if I had not judged this a necessary service to the Church, which did more decently come from one, who, how undeserving soever he is, yet is raised to a Post that may justify the writing on so tender a Head, I should never have undertaken it. But my Zeal for the true Interests of Religion, and of this Church, determined me to set about it; yet since my Design is to correct things for the future, rather than to reproach any for what is past, I have resolved to cast it rather into Advices and Rules, into plain and short Directions, than into long and laboured Discourses, supported by the shews of Learning, and Citations from Fathers, and Historical Observations; this being the more profitable, and the less invidious way of handling the Subject.

It ought to be no Imputation on a Church, if too many of those that are dedicated to her Service, have not all the Characters that are here set forth, and that are to be desired in Clergymen. Even in the Apostles days there were false Apostles, and false Teachers; as one of the Twelve was a Traytor, and had a Devil;

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1. Phil.  
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some loved the pre-eminence, others loved this present World to a scandalous degree; some of those that preached Christ, did it *not sincerely, but out of contention*; they vied with the Apostles, and hoped to have carried away the esteem from them, even while they were suffering for the Faith: for envying their Credit, they designed to raise their own Authority, by lessening the Apostles; and so hoped to have *added affliction to their bonds*. In the first and purest Ages of the Church we find great Complaints of the Neglects and Disorders of the Clergy of all Ranks. Many became the *Stewards* and *Bailiffs* of other Peoples Estates; and while they looked too diligently after those *Cares* which did not belong to them, they even in those times of trial, grew very remiss in the most *important* of all *Cares*, which was their proper business.

As soon as the Empire became Christian, the Authority, the Immunity, and the other Advantages, which by the bounty of Princes, followed the Sacred Functions, made them to be generally much desired; and the Elections being then for most part popular, (though in some of the greater Cities, the Magistracy took them into their hands, and the Bishops of the Province were the Judges both of the fitness of the Person, and of the regularity of the Election); these were managed with much faction and violence, which often ended in blood, and that to so great an excess, that if we had not Witnesses to many Instances of this among the best men in those Ages, it would look like an uncharitable Imputation on those Times, to think them capable of such Enormities. Indeed the Disorders, the Animosities, the going so oft back-

backwards and forwards in the matters of Faith, as the Emperors happened to be of different Sides, are but too ample a proof of the Corruptions that had then got into the Church. And what can we think of the breach made in the Churches of *Africk* by *Donatus*, and his Followers, upon so inconsiderable a Point, as whether *Cecilian* and his *Ordainers* had denied the *Faith* in the last Persecution, or not? which grew to that height, that almost in every Town of *Africk* there were divided Assemblies, and separating Bishops, upon that Account. Nor was this Wound healed but with the utter ruine of those Churches. *St. Jerom*, though partial enough to his own side, as appears by his espousing *Damasus's* Interests, notwithstanding that vast effusion of blood that had been at his Election; which was set on by him, and continued for four days with so much violence, that in one night, and at one Church, a hundred and seven and thirty were killed; yet he could not hold from laying open the Corruptions of the Clergy in a very severe style. He grew so weary of them, and they of him, that he went and spent the rest of his days at *Betlehem*.

Those Corruptions were so much the more remarkable, because the Eminent Men of those times, procured a great many Canons to be made, both in Provincial and General Councils, for correcting Abuses, as soon as they observed them creeping into the Church: but it is plain from *St. Chrysostom's* Story, that tho bad men did not oppose the making good Rules, while they were so many dead Letters in their Registers; yet they could not bear the rigorous Execution of them: so that those good Canons do shew us indeed what were the growing

## The Preface.

Abuses of the Times, in which they were made; and how good men set themselves against them; but are no sure indications of the Reformation that was effected by them.

The Tottering state of the *Roman* Empire which had then fallen under a vast Dissolution of Discipline and Manners, and coming into feeble hands, was then sinking with its own weight, and was become on all sides an easy Prey to its Invaders, who were either *Pagans* or *Arians*, ought to have awakened the Governours of the Church to have apprehended their approaching Ruin; to have prevented it by their Prayers and Endeavours; and to have corrected those Abuses which had provoked God, and weakned and distract ed both Church and Empire. But if we may believe either *Gildas* here in *Britain*, or *Salvian* in *France*, they rather grew worse, more impenitent, and more insensible, when they saw the Judgments of God coming upon the Empire, Province after Province rent from it, and over-run by the *Barbarians*.

When that great Wound was in some sort healed, and a Second Form of Christianity rose up and prevailed again in the *Western* Parts, and the World became *Christian* with the allay that dark and superstitious Ages had brought into that holy Doctrine: Then all the Rules of the former Ages were so totally forgotten, and laid aside, that the Clergy universally lost their esteem: And tho' *Charles* the Great, and his Son, held a great many Councils for correcting these Abuses, and published many *Capitulars* on the same design; yet all was to no purpose: There was neither Knowledge nor Ver-  
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## The Preface.

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ture enough left to reform a Corruption that was become universal. The Clergy by these Disorders fell under a general Contempt, and out of that rose the Authority, as well as the Wealth of the *Monastick Orders*; and when Riches and Power had corrupted them, the *Begging Orders* took away the Credit from both; yet even their Reputation, which the outward severity of their Rule, Habit, and Manner of Life did both establish and maintain long, was at last so generally lost, that no Part or Body of the *Roman Clergy* had Credit enough to stop the Progress of the *Reformation*; which was in a great measure occasion'd by the scorn and hatred that fell on them, and which was so spread over all the parts of *Europe*, that to it, even their own Historians do impute the great Advances that *Luther's Doctrine* made for about Fifty Years together; whole Kingdoms and Provinces embracing it as it were all of the sudden.

It has now for above an Hundred Years made a full stand, and in most places it has rather lost ground, than gained any. The true account of this is not easily given; the Doctrine is the same; and it has been of late defended with greater Advantages, with more Learning, and better Reasoning than it was at first; yet with much less Success. The true reason of the slackning of that Work, must be imputed to the Reformation made in several Points with relation to the Manners, and the Labours of the Clergy, by the *Church of Rome*, and the Depravation under which most of the *Reformed Churches* are fallen. For the Manners and the Labours of the Clergy, are real Arguments, which all people do both understand and feel; they have a much more convincing,

*The Preface.*

cing force, they are more visible, and persuade more universally, than Books can do, which are less read, and less considered : And indeed the Bulk of Masses is so made, that there is no working on them, but by moving their Affections, and commanding their Esteem. It cannot be denied but that the Council of *Trent* established the Errors of Popery in such a manner, as to cut off all possibility of ever treating, or reuniting with them ; since those *Decisions*, and their *Infallibility*, which is their Foundation, are now so twisted together, that they must stand and fall together : Yet they established such a Reformation in *Discipline*, as may make Churches that pretend to a more *Glorious Title*, justly ashamed. For tho, there are such Reserves made for the Plenitude of the *Papal Authority*, that in great instances, and for a Favourite, all may be broke through ; yet the most notorious Abuses are so struck at, and this has been in many places so effectually observed, chiefly where they knew that their Deportment was looked into, and watched over by *Protestants*, that it must be acknowledged, that the cry of the Scandals of Religious Houses is much laid : And tho' there is still much Ignorance among their *Mass-Priests* ; yet their *Parish-Priests* are generally another sort of men : They are well instructed in their Religion ; lead regular Lives, and perform their Parochial Duties with a most wonderful diligence : They do not only say Mass, and the other publick Functions daily, but they are almost perpetually imploying themselves in the several parts of their Cures : Instructing the Youth, hearing Confessions, and visiting the Sick : and besides all this, they  
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are under the constant obligation of the *Breviary*: There is no such thing as *Non-residence* or *Plurality*, to be heard of in whole Countries of that Communion; and tho' about Cathedrals, and in Greater Cities, the vast number of *Priests*, gives still great and just occasion to censure; yet the *Parish-Priests* have almost universally recovered the Esteem of the People: They are no more disposed to think ill of them, or to hearken to any thing that may give them a *just cause*, or at least a *plausible colour* for departing from them. So that the *Reformation* that *Papery* hath been forced to make, has in a great measure stopt the progress of the *Reformation* of the *Doctrine* and *Worship* that did so long carry every thing before it.

But this is the least Melancholy part of the Account that may be given of this matter. The *Reformers* began that blessed Work with much Zeal; they and their first Successors carried it on with Learning and Spirit: They were active in their Endeavours, and constant and patient in their Sufferings; and these things turn'd the esteem of the world, which was alienated from *Papery*, by the Ignorance and Scandals of the *Clergy*, all towards them: But when they felt the warmth of the Protection and Encouragement that Princes and States gave them, they insensibly slackned; They fell from their *First Heat* and *Love*; they began to build Houses for themselves, and their Families, and neglected the *House of God*: They rested satisfied with their having reformed the *Doctrine* and *Worship*; but did not study to reform the *Lives* and *Manners* of their People: And while in their *Offices* they lamented the not having a *Publick*  
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*Discipline* in the Church, as it was in the Primitive Times ; They have either made no attempts at all, or at least very faint ones for restoring it. And thus, while *Popery* has purified itself from many former Abuses, *Reformed Churches* have added new ones to the old, that they still retain, and are fond of. Zeal in Devotion, and Diligence in the *Pastoral Care*, are fallen under too visible and too scandalous a decay. And whereas the understanding of the Scriptures, and an Application to that Sacred Study, was at first the distinguishing Character of *Protestants*, for which they were generally nicknamed *Gospellers* ; These *Holy Writings* are now so little studied, that such as are obliged to look narrowly into the matter, find great cause of regret and lamentation, from the gross Ignorance of such as either are in Orders, or that pretend to be put in them. But the most Capital and Comprehensive of all Abuses, is, That the false Opinion of the worst Ages of *Popery*, that made the chief, if not the only obligation of *Priests* to be the performing *Offices* ; and judged, that if these were done, the chief part of their Business was also done, by which the *Pastoral Care* came to be in a great measure neglected, does continue still to leaven us : While men imagine that their whole work consists in Publick *Functions*, and so reckon, that if they either do these themselves, or procure and hire another person in *Holy Orders* to do them, that then they answer the *Obligation* that lies on them : And thus the *Pastoral Care*, the instructing, the Exhorting, the Admonishing and Reproving, the directing and conducting, the visiting and comforting the People of the Parish, is generally

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ly neglected: while the Incumbent does not think fit to look after it, and the Curate thinks himself bound to nothing but barely to perform Offices according to agreement.

It is chiefly on design to raise the sense of the Obligations of the Clergy to the Duties of the *Pastoral Care*, that this Book is written. Many things do concur in our present Circumstances, to awaken us of the Clergy, to mind and do our duty with more zeal and application than ever. It is very visible that in this present Age, the Reformation is not only at a stand, but is going back, and grows sensibly weaker and weaker. Some Churches have been plucked up by the roots; and brought under a total desolation and dispersion; and others have fallen under terrible oppressions and shakings. We have seen a Design formed and carried on long, for the utter destruction of that *Great Work*. The Clouds were so thick gathered over us, that we saw we were marked out for destruction: And when that was once compassed, our Enemies saw well enough, that the rest of their Designs would be more easily brought about. It is true, our Enemies intended to set us one upon another by turns, to make us do half their work; and to have still an abused Party among us ready to carry on their Ends; for they thought it too bold an Attempt, to fall upon all at once; but while they were thus shifting Hands, it pleased God to cut them short in their Designs; and to blast that part of them in which we were concerned, so entirely, that now they carry them on more barefacedly: and drive at *Conquest*, which is at one stroke to de-

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Atroy our Church and Religion, our Laws and our Properties.

In this critical state of things, we ought not only to look at the Instruments of the Calamities that have fallen so heavily on so many Protestant Churches, and of the Dangers that hang over the rest; but we ought chiefly to look up to that God, who seems to be provoked at the whole Reformation; because they have not walked suitably to the Light that they have so long enjoyed, and the Blessings which had been so long continued to them; but have corrupted their ways before him. They have lost the *Power of Religion*, while they have seemed to magnify the *Form* of it, and have been zealous for Opinions and Customs; and therefore God has in his *wrath*, taken even that *Form* from them, and has loathed their *Solemn Assemblies*; and brought them under a *famine of the Word of the Lord*, which they had so much despised. While these things are so, and while we find that we our selves, are as a *brand pluck'd out of the fire*, which may be thrown back into it again, if we are not alarmed by the just, but unsearchable Judgments of God, which have wasted other Churches so terribly, while they have only frightened us; what is more evident, than that the present state of things, and the *signs of the times*, call aloud upon the whole Nation to bring forth *fruits meet for repentance*? *since the ax is laid to the root of the tree*. And as this indeed concerns the body of the Nation, so we who are the *Priests and Ministers of the Lord*, are under more particular Obligations, first to look into our own ways, and to reform whatsoever is amiss among us, and then to be Intercessors

tercessors for the People, committed to our Charge : to be mourning for their Sins, and by our secret Fastings and Prayers, to be standing in those Breaches which our crying Abominations have made : and so to be averting those Judgments, which may be ready to break in upon us ; and chiefly to be *lifting up our voices like Trumpets, to shew our people their transgressions.* To be giving them faithful warning, from which we may expect this blessed success, that we may at least gain upon such a number, that for their sakes, God, *who will not slay the righteous with the wicked,* may be yet entreated for our sins ; and that the Judgments which hang over us, being quite dissipated, his Gospel, together with Peace and Plenty, may still dwell among us, and may shine from us, with happy Influences to all the ends of the Earth. And even such Pastors as shall faithfully do their duty, but without any success, may depend upon this, that they shall *save their own souls* ; and shall have a distinguished fate, if we should happen to fall under a common Calamity: they having on them not only the *mark of Mourners* and Intercessors, but of *faithful Shepherds* : Whereas if an overflowing Scourge should break in upon us, we have all possible reason, both from the Judgments of God, and the present scituation of Affairs, to believe that it will *begin at the Sanctuary,* at those who have *profaned the holy things* ; and have made the *daily Sacrifice* to be loathed.

There is another, and perhaps yet a more dismal Character of the present state of the Age, that calls on the Clergy, to consider well both their own deportment, and the Obligations that lie upon them ; which is the

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growing *Atheism* and *Impiety*, that is daily gaining ground, not only among us, but indeed all *Europe* over. There is a Circulation observed in the general Corruptions of Nations: sometimes Ignorance and Brutality overruns the World, that makes way for Superstition and Idolatry: When Mankind is disgusted with these, then fantastical and Enthusiastical Principles, and under these hypocritical Practises have their course; these being seen through, give great occasions to profaness, and with that, *Atheism*, and a disbelief of all Religion, at least of all Revealed Religion, is nourished: and that is very easily received by depraved Minds, but very hardly rooted out of them: For though it is very easie to beat an Enquirer into things, out of all speculative *Atheism*; yet when a disbelief of Sacred Matters, and a profane Contempt of them, has once vitiated ones mind, it is a very extraordinary thing, and next to miraculous, to see such an one reduced. Now this I am forced to declare, That having had much free Conversation with many that have been fatally corrupted that way, they have very often owned to me, that nothing promoted this so much in them, as the very bad Opinion which they took up of all Clergy-men of all sides: They did not see in them that strictness of life, that contempt of the World, that Zeal, that Meekness, Humility and Charity; that Diligence and Earnestness, with relation to the great Truths of the Christian Religion, which they reckoned they would most certainly have, if they themselves firmly believed it: Therefore they concluded, that those, whose business it was more strictly to enquire into the truth of their Religion, knew

knew that it was not so certain, as they themselves, for other ends, endeavoured to make the World believe it was: And that, tho for carrying on of their own Authority or Fortunes, which in one word, they call their *Trade*, they seemed to be very positive in affirming the Truth of their Doctrines; yet they in their own hearts did not believe it, since they lived so little suitable to it, and were so much set on raising themselves by it; and so little on advancing the Honour of their *Profession*, by an exemplary Piety, and a Shining Conversation.

This is a thing not to be answered by being angry at them for saying it, or by reproaching such as repeat it, as if they were *Enemies to the Church*; these Words of Heat and Faction signifying nothing to work upon, or convince any. For how little strength soever there may be in this, as it is made an Argument, it is certainly so strong a prejudice, that nothing but a real Refutation of it, by the eminent Vertues and Labours of many of the Clergy, will ever conquer it. To this, as a Branch or Part of it, another consideration from the present State of things is to be added, to call upon the Clergy to set about the Duties of their Calling; and that is, the contempt they are generally fallen under, the Injustice they daily meet with, in being denied their Rights, and that by some out of Principle, and by others out of downright and undisguised Sacrilege. I know a great deal of this is too justly, and too truly to be cast on the Poverty of the Clergy: But what can we say, when we find often the poorest Clerks in the Richest Livings? whose Incumbents not content to devour the Patrimony of the Church,



Church, while they feed themselves, and not the Flock out of it; are so scandalously hard in their Allowance to their Curates, as if they intended equally to starve both Curate and People: And is it to be supposed, that the People will think themselves under a very strict obligation of Conscience, to pay religiously all that is due to one, who seems to think himself under no obligation to labour for it? And since it is a *Maxim* founded upon Natural Equity, That the *Benefice* is given for the *Office*; men will not have great Scruples in denying the *Benefice*, where the *Office* is neglected, or ill performed. And as for the too common Contempt that is brought on the Clergy, how guilty soever those may be, who out of hatred to their Profession, despise them for their works sake; yet we who feel our selves under these Disadvantages, ought to reflect on those Words of the Prophet, and see how far they are applicable to us; *The Priests lips should keep Knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth, for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts. But ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble at the Law: Therefore have I also made you contemptible and base before all the People; according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in my Law.* If we studied to honour God, and so to do honour to our Profession, we might justly hope that he would raise it again to that credit which is due to it; and that he would make even our Enemies to be at peace with us, or at least afraid to hurt or offend us. And in this we have good reason to rest assured; since we do not find many Instances of Clergy-men, who live and labour, who preach and visit as they ought to do, that are under any Eminent Degrees of Contempt: If some  
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do despise those that are faithful to their Trust, yet they must do it secretly ; they dare not shew it, as long as their Department procures them the Esteem, which we must confess does generally follow true Worth, and hearty Labours in the Ministry.

These are things of such consequence, that it may seem a Consideration too full of ill Nature, of Emulation, and of Jealousie, if I should urge upon the Clergy the Divisions and Separation that is formed among us ; though there is a terrible Word in the Prophet, that belongs but too evidently to this likewise ; *The Pastors* Jer. 10. *are become brutish, and have not sought the Lord ; therefore<sup>21.</sup> they shall not prosper, and all their Flocks shall be scattered.* If we led such Exemplary Lives, as became our Character, if we applied our selves wholly to the Duties of our Profession, if we studied to outlive, and outlabour those that divide from us ; we might hope by the Blessing of God, so far to overcome their Prejudices, and to gain both upon their Esteem and Affections, that a very small matter might go a great way towards the healing of those Wounds, which have so long weakned and distracted us. Speculative Arguments do not reach the Understandings of the greater part, who are only capable of sensible ones : and the strongest Reasoning will not prevail, till we first force them to think the better of our Church, for what they see in our selves, and make them wish to be of a Communion, in which they see so much Truth, and unaffected Goodness and Worth : When they are once brought so far, it will be easy to compass all the rest : If we did generally mind our Duties, and discharge them faithfully, this would prepare such as mean well.



well in their Separation from us, to consider better of the Grounds on which they maintain it: And that will best enforce the Arguments that we have to lay before them. And as for such as divide from us with bad Designs, and an unrelenting Spite, they will have a small party, and a feeble support, if there were no more occasion given to work on the Affections of the People, by our Errours and Disorders.

If then either the sense of the Wrath of God, or the desire of his Favour and Protection; if Zeal for our Church and Countrey; if a sense of the progress of Atheism and Irreligion; if the contempt that falls on us, and the Injustices that are daily done us; if a desire to heal and unite, to purifie and perfect this our Church: If either the Concerns of this World, or of the next, can work upon us, and affect us, all these things concur to call on us, to apply our utmost Care and Industry to raise the Honour of our *Holy Profession*, to walk worthy of it, to perform the Engagements that we came under at the *Altar*, when we were dedicated to the Service of God, and the Church; and in all things both to adorn our Religion, and our Church.

It is not our boasting that the *Church of England* is the best reformed, and the best constituted Church in the world, that will signifie much to convince others: We are too much Parties to be believed in our own Cause. There was a Generation of men that cried, *The Temple of the Lord, the Temple of the Lord*, as loud as we can cry, *The Church of England, the Church of England*: When yet by their sins they were pulling it down: and kindling that Fire  
which

which consumed it. It will have a better grace to see others boast of our Church, from what they observe in us, than for us to be crying it up with our *words*, when our *deeds* do decry it. Our Enemies will make severe Inferences from them; and our Pretensions will be thought vain and impudent things, as long as our Lives contradict them.

It was on design to raise in my self and in others, a deep sense of the obligations that we lie under, of the Duties of our Functions; of the extent of them, and of the Rewards that follow them, and to observe the proper Methods of performing them, so as they may be of the greatest advantage both to our selves and others, that I have entred on these Meditations. They have been for many years the chief Subjects of my Thoughts: If few have writ on them among us, yet we have St. *Gregory Nazianzen's* Apologetick, Saint *Chrysostom's* Books of the Priesthood, *Gregory the Great's* Pastoral, and *Bernard's* Book of Consideration, among the Ancients, and a very great number of Excellent Treatises, writ lately in *France* upon them. I began my Studies in Divinity with reading these, and I never yet grew weary of them; they raise so many Noble Designs, they offer such Schemes, and carry so much of unction and life in them, that I hope an imperfect Essay this way may have some effect. For the Searcher of hearts knows, I have no Design in it, save this of stirring up in my self and others, the gift which was given by the Imposition of hands.



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OF THE

# Pastoral Care.

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## CHAP. I.

*Of the Dignity of Sacred Employments, and the Names and Designations given to them in Scripture.*



OW low soever the Esteem of the Clergy may be sunk in a profane and corrupt Age, and how much soever the Errors and Disorders of Clergy-men may have contributed to bring this not only upon themselves, but upon others who deserve better, but are unhappy in being mixed with so much ill Company; yet certainly if we either consider the nature of things in themselves, or the value that is set on that *Profession*, in the Scriptures, it will appear that it ought to be considered at another rate than it is. As much as the *Soul* is better than the *Body*, and as much as the purifying and perfecting the *Soul* is preferable to all those Mechanical Employments which relate to the *Body*, and as much as *Eternity* is more valuable than this short and transitory *Life*; so much does this Employment excel all others.

A Clergy-man, by his Character and design of life, ought to be a man separated from the Cares and Concerns of this World, and dedicated to the study and meditation of Divine matters. Whose Conversation ought to be a Pattern for others; a constant Preaching to his People: who ought to offer up the Prayers of the People in their name, and as their mouth to God; who ought to be praying and interceding for them in secret, as well as officia-

ting among them in publick: who ought to be distributing among them the Bread of life, *the Word of God*; and to be dispensing among them the sacred Rites, which are the Badges, the Union, and the Supports of Christians. He ought to admonish, to reprove, and to comfort them, not only by his general Doctrine in his Sermons, but from *House to House*; that so he may do these things more home and effectually, than can be done from the Pulpit. He is to watch over their Souls, to keep them from error, and to alarm them out of their sins, by giving them *warning* of the Judgments of God; to visit the sick, and to prepare them for the Judgment and life to come.

This is the *Function* of a *Clergy-man*; who that he may perform all these Duties with more advantage, and better effect, ought to behave himself so well, that his own Conversation may not only be without *offence*, but be so *exemplary*, that his People may have reason to conclude, that he himself does firmly believe all those things which he proposes to them: that he thinks himself bound to follow all those Rules that he sets them; and that they may see such a serious spirit of Devotion in him, that from thence they may be induced to believe, that his chief design among them, is to do them good, and to save their Souls: which may prepare them so to esteem and love him, that they may not be prejudiced against any thing that he does and says in publick, by any thing that they observe in himself in secret. He must also be employing himself so well in his private Studies, that from thence he may be furnished with such a variety of lively thoughts, divine meditations, and proper and noble expressions, as may enable him to discharge every part of his duty, in such a manner, as may raise not so much his own reputation, as the credit of his Function, and of the great *Message of Reconciliation* that is committed to his charge: Above all Studies, he ought to apply himself to understand the Holy Scriptures aright; to have his memory well furnished that way, that so upon all occasions, he may be able to enforce what he lays out of them, and so *be an able Minister of the New Testament*.

This is in short the *Character* of a true *Clergy-man*, which is to be more fully opened and enlarged on in the following parts of this Book. All this looks so great and so noble, that it does not appear necessary to raise it, or to insist on it more fully. Indeed it  
speaks



speaks its own dignity so sensibly, that none will dispute it, but such as are open Enemies to all Religion in general, or to the Christian Religion in particular; and yet even few of these, are so entirely corrupted, as not to wish that External Order and Policy were kept up among men, for restraining the Injustice and Violence of unruly Appetites and Passions; which few, even of the Tribe of the Libertines, seem to desire to be let loose; since the Peace and Safety of Mankind, require that the World be kept in Method, and under some Yoke.

It will be more suitable to my design, to shew how well this Character agrees with that which is laid down in the Scriptures concerning these Offices. I shall begin first with the Names, and then go on to the Descriptions, and lastly proceed to the Rules that we find in them. The name of *Deacon*, that is now appropriated to the lowest Office in the Church, was in the time that the New Testament was writ, used more promiscuously: For the *Apostles*, the *Evangelists*, and those whom the Apostles sent to visit the Churches, are all called by this name. Generally in all those places where the word *Minister* is in our Translation, it is *Deacon* in the Greek, which signifies properly a *Servant*, or one who labours for another. Such Persons are dedicated to the immediate Service of God; and are appropriated to the Offices and Duties of the Church: so this term both expresses the dignity and the labour of the Employment.

The next Order carries now the name of *Presbyter*, or *Elder*; which tho at first it was applied not only to *Bishops*, but to the *Apostles* themselves; yet in the succeeding Ages, it came to be appropriated to the Second Rank of the Officers in the Church. It either signifies a Seniority of *Age*, or of *Christianity*, in opposition to a *Neophyte* or *Novice*, one newly converted to the Faith; but by common Practice, as *Senite* or *Senator*, being at first given to Councillors, by reason of their *Age*, came afterwards to be a Title appropriate to them; so the Title *Presbyter* (altered in pronunciation to be in *English*, *Priest*) or *Elder* being a Character of respect, denotes the Dignity of those to whom it belongs: But since St. Paul divides this Title either into two different Ranks, or into two different Performances of the Duties of the same Rank, those that rule well, and those that labour in Word and Doctrine; this

1 Tim. 5. 5.  
is 19.

is a Title that *speaks* both the Dignity, and likewise the Duty belonging to this Function.

The Title which is now by the Custom of many Ages given to the highest Function in the Church, of *Bishop*, or *Inspector*, and *Overseer*, as it imports a Dignity in him, as the chief of those who *labour*; so it does likewise express his obligation to care and diligence, both in observing, and overseeing the whole *Flock*, and more specially in inspecting the Deportment and Labours of his *Fellow Workmen*, who are subordinate to him in the constitution of the Church, yet ought to be esteemed by him in imitation of the *Apostles*, his *Brethren*, his *Fellow-Labourers*, and *Fellow-Servants*. Next to the Names of the Sacred Functions, I shall consider the other Designations and Figures, made use of to express them.

The most common is that of *Pastor* or *Shepherd*. It is to be remembered, that in the first simplicity of Mankind for many Ages, men looked after their own Cattel, or employed their Children in it; and when they trusted that care to any other, it was no small sign of their Confidence, according to what *Jacob* said to *Laban*. The care of a good *Shepherd* was a Figure then so well understood, that the Prophet expresses God's care of his People, by this, of his feeding them as a *Shepherd*, carrying his *Lambs* in his *Bosom*, and gently leading them that were with young. Christ also calls himself the Good Shepherd, that knew his *Sheep*, and did not as a *hireling*, fly away when the *Wolf* came, but laid down his life for his *Sheep*. This then being so often made use of in both Testaments, is an expression of the great Trust committed to the Clergy, which likewise supposes a great, a constant, and a tender care in looking to, in feeding or instructing, in watching over, and guarding the *Flock* against Errors and Sins, and their being ready to offer themselves to the first Fury of *Persecution*.

The Title of *Stewards*, or *Dispensers*, which is the most honourable in a Household, is also given to them. These assign to every one his due share, both of Labour and of Provision; these watch over them, and have the care and order of the other Servants assigned to them. So in this great *Family*, of which *Christ* is the *Head*, the *Stewards* are a Post of great Dignity, but also of much Labour, they ought to be observing the rest of this Household, that they may be faithful in the distribution, and so encourage, admonish, reprove or censure, as there is occasion for it. They

Isa. 40. 11.

Joh. 10. 1.

1 Cor. 4  
1, 2.



They are also called *Ambassadors*, and that upon the noblest and <sup>2 Cor. 5. 19, 20.</sup> desirablest Message, for their business is to treat of *Peace* between God and Man; to them is given the *Word* or Doctrine of *Reconciliation*; they are sent by Christ, and do speak in God's Name; as if *God did beseech men by them; so do they in Christ's stead*, who is the Mediator, *press men to be reconciled to God*; Words of a very high sound, of great Trust and Dignity, but which import likewise great obligations. An *Ambassador* is very solicitous to maintain the Dignity of his Character, and his Master's Honour; and chiefly to carry on that which is the main business that he is sent upon, which he is always contriving how to promote: So if the Honour of this Title affects us as it ought to do, with a just value for it, we ought at the same time to consider the Obligations that accompany it, of living suitable to it, answering in some sort, the Dignity and Majesty of *the King of kings*, that has committed it to us; and of labouring with all possible diligence, to effectuate the great Design on which we are sent; The reconciling Sinners to God: The *Work* having in it self a proportion to the *Dignity* of him that employs us in it.

Another, and yet a more Glorious Title, is that of *Angels*, who as they are of a pure and sublime Nature, and are called a *Flaming* <sup>Rev. 21. 3.</sup> *Fire*, so they do always behold the face of *our Heavenly Father*, and <sup>2 Cor. 8. 23.</sup> ever do his will, and are also *Ministring Spirits*, sent forth to minister to them that are appointed to be the Heirs of Salvation: This Title is given to Bishops and Pastors; and as if that were not enough, they are in one place called not only the Messengers or *Angels of the Churches*, but also *the Glory of Christ*. The Natural Importance of this is, that men to whom this Title is applied, ought to imitate those Heavenly Powers, in the elevation of their Souls; to contemplate the Works and Glory of God, and in their constant *doing his will*, more particularly in *ministring* to the Souls of those, for whom the great Angel of the Covenant made himself a Sacrifice.

I do not among these Titles reckon those of *Rulers* or *Governours*, <sup>3. Heb. 7. 17.</sup> that are also given to Bishops, because they seem to be but another Name for *Bishops*, whose Inspection was a Rule and Government, and so carried in its signification, both Authority and Labour. To these Designations, that carry in them Characters of *Honour*; but of *Honour* joyned to *Labour*, and for the sake of which

which the *Honour* was due, according to that, *esteem them very highly for their works sake*; I shall add some other Designations, that in their significations carry only *Labour* without *Honour*, being borrowed from *Labours* that are hard, but no way *Honourable*.

3. *Ezekiel* 7. They are often called *Watchmen*, who used to stand on high Towers, and were to give the Alarm, as they saw occasion for it: These Men were obliged to a constant attendance, to watch in the Night, as well as in the Day: So all this being applied to the Clergy, imports that they ought to be upon their *Watch-Tower*, observing what Dangers their People are exposed to, either by their Sins, which provoke the Judgments of God; or by the Designs of their Enemies; they ought not by a false respect, suffer them to sleep and perish in their Sins; but must denounce the Judgments of God to them, and rather incur their displeasure by their freedom, than suffer them to perish in their Security.

1 *Cor* 3. 10. St. Paul does also call Church-men by the Name of *Builders*, and gives to the *Apostles* the Title of *Master-builders*; this imports both hard and painful Labour, and likewise great care and exactness in it, for want of which the Building will be not only exposed to the injuries of Weather, but will quickly tumble down; and it gives us to understand, that those who carry this Title, ought to study well the Great Rule, by which they must carry on the Interest of Religion, that so they may *build up their people in their most holy Faith*, so as to be a *Building fitly framed together*.

1 *Cor* 3. 9. St. Paul. They are also called *Labourers in God's Husbandry*, *Labourers in his Vineyard*, and *Harvest*, who are to *sow, plant and water*, and to cultivate the Soil of the Church. This imports a continual return of daily and hard Labour, which requires both Pain and Diligence: They are also called *Soldiers*, men that did war and fight against the *Powers of Darkness*. The Fatigue, the Dangers and Difficulties of that State of Life, are so well understood, that no Application is necessary to make them more sensible.

2. Philip. 25.

And thus by a particular enumeration of either the more special names of these Offices, such as *Deacon, Priest and Bishop, Ruler and Governour*, or of the designations given to them of *Shepherds* or *Pastors, Stewards, Ambassadors* and *Angels*, it appears that there is a great *Dignity* belonging to them, but a *Dignity* which must carry *labour* with it, as that for which the *honour* is due: The other

other Titles of *Watchmen*, *Builders*, *Labourers* and *Soldiers*, import also that they are to decline no part of their *duty*, for the *labour* that is in it, the dangers that may follow, or the seeming meanness that may be in it, since we have for this so great a Rule and Pattern set us by our Saviour, who has given us this Character of himself, and in that a Rule to all that pretend to come after him, *The son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister.* This was said upon the proud Contentions that had been among his Disciples, who should be the greatest: two of them presuming upon their near relation to him, and pretending to the first Dignity in his Kingdom; upon that he gave them to understand, That the Dignities of his Kingdom were not to be of the same nature with those that were in the World. It was not *Rule* or *Empire* to which they were to pretend; *The Disciple was not to be above his Lord*: And he that humbled himself to be the last and lowest in his Service, was by so doing, really the first.

He himself descended to the *washing his Disciples feet*; which he proposeth to their imitation; and that came in latter Ages to be taken up by Princes, and acted by them in *pageantry*: But the plain account of that Action, is, That it was a Prophetical Emblem; of which sort we find several Instances both in *Isaiah*, *Jeremy* and *Ezekiel*: the Prophet doing somewhat that had a mystical signification in it, relating to the Subject of his Prophecy: So that our Saviour's washing the feet of his Disciples, imported the Humility, and the descending to the meanest Offices of Charity, which he recommended to his Followers, particularly to those whom he appointed to preach his Gospel to the World.

## C H A P. II.

*Of the Rules set down in Scripture for those that minister in Holy things ; and of the Corruptions that are set forth in them.*

- I** Intend to write with all possible simplicity, without the affectations of a strictness of Method: and therefore I will give one full view of this whole matter, without any other order than as it lies in the Scriptures: and will lay both the Rules and the Reproofs that are in them together, as things that give light to one another. In the *Law of Moses* we find many very particular Rules given for the washing and consecration of the *Priests* and *Levites*, chiefly of the *Holy Priest*. The whole Tribe of *Levi* was sanctified and separated from the common Labours, either of War or Tillage: and tho they were but one in twelve, yet a tenth of all was appointed for them: they were also to have a large share of another tenth; that so they might be not only delivered from all cares, by that large provision that was made for them, but might be able to relieve the necessities of the Widows and Fatherless, the Poor and the Strangers, that sojourned among them; and by their bounty and charity, be possessed both of the love and esteem of the People. They were *holy to the Lord*; they were said to be *sanctified* or dedicated to God; and the Head of their Order carried on his Mitre this Inscription, *Holiness to the Lord*. The many washings that they were often to use, chiefly in doing their Functions, carried this signification in them, that they were appropriated to God, and that they were under very strict obligations to a high degree of purity; they might not so much as mourn for their dead Relations, to shew how far they ought to rise above all the concerns of *flesh and blood*, and even the most excusable passions of human nature. But above all things, these Rules taught them, with what exactness, decency and purity they ought to perform those Offices that belonged to their Function; and therefore when *Aaron's* two Sons, *Nadab* and *Abihu* transgressed the Law that God had given, *fire came out from the Lord, and devoured them*; and the reason given for it, carries in it a perpetual Rule. *I will be sanctified*
- Levit. 8.
- Levit. 21.  
1.
- Levit. 22.  
3. 4.
- Levit. 10.  
1.
- v. 3.



in all them that draw near to me, and before all the people I will be glorified: Which import, that such as minister in Holy things, ought to behave themselves so, that God's Name may be glorified by their means; otherwise, that God will glorify himself by his severe Judgments on them. A signal Instance of which we do also find in *Eliz's* two Sons, whose Impieties and Defilements, as they made the People to abhor the offering of the Lord: so they also drew down, not only heavy Judgments on themselves, but on the whole House of *Eliz*; and ineed on the whole Nation.

1 Sam. 2:1  
& 3d Ch.

But besides the attendance which the Priests and Levites were bound to give at the Temple, and on the Publick Service there, they were likewise obliged to study the Law, to give the People warning out of it, to instruct them in it, and to conduct them, and watch over them: And for this reason they had *Cities* assigned them in all the Corners of the Land; that so they might both more easily observe the Manners of the People, and that the People might more easily have recourse to them. Now when that Nation became corrupted both by Idolatry and Immorality, God raised up Prophets to be extraordinary Monitors to them; to declare to them their Sins, and to denounce those Judgments which were coming upon them, because of them; we find the silence, the ignorance, and the corruption of their *Pastors*, their *Shepherds*, and their *Watchmen*, is a main Article of their Charge; so *Isaiah* tells *Isa. 56. 10.* them, that their *Watchmen* were blind, ignorant, dumb dogs, that could not bark; sleeping, lying down, and loving to slumber: Yet these careless *Watchmen* were covetous and insatiable, They were greedy dogs, which could never have enough; *Shepherds* they were, that could not understand; but how remiss soever they might be in God's Work, they were careful enough of their own: They all looked to their own way, every one to his own gain from his quarter. They were, no doubt, exact in levying their *Tithes* and *First-fruits*, how little soever they might do for them, baring their bare attendance at the Temple, to officiate there; so guilty they were of that reigning Abuse, of thinking they had done their duty, if they either by themselves, or by Proxy, had performed their Functions without minding what was incumbent on them, as *Watchmen*, or *Shepherds*. In opposition to such careless and corrupt Guides, God promises to his People, To set *Watch-men* over them that should never hold their peace day nor night.



As the Captivity drew nearer, we may easily conclude, That the Corruptions both of *Priests* and *People* increased, which ripened them for the Induration of *God*; they were kept back by the Re-formations which *Alexander* and *Jonah* had made: but at last, all was so depraved that *God* sent two Prophets, *Jeremiah* and *Ezekiel*, to prepare them for that terrible Calamity, yet this was only to save some few among them; for the Sins of the Nation were grown to that height, that tho *Moses* and *Samuel*, *Noah*, *Job* and *Daniel*, had been then alive, to intercede for them, yet *God* declared that he would not *hear them*; nor *spare the Nation for their sakes*: so that even such mighty Intercessors could only save their own Souls. In this deplorable state we shall find that their *Priests* and *Pastors* had their large share. *The Priests said not, Where is the Lord? They that handled the Law, knew me not, the Pastors also transgressed against me*; and their Corruption went so far, that they had not only false Prophets to support them, but the People, who, how bad soever they may be themselves, do generally hate evil *Priests*, grew to be pleased with it. *The Prophets prophecy falsely; and the Priests bear rule by their means; and my people love to have it so: From the Prophet even to the Priest, every one dealt falsely. And upon that, a woe is denounced against the Pastors that destroyed and scattered the sheep of God's pasture. They by their Office ought to have fed the People; but instead of that, they had scattered the flock, and driven them away, and had not visited them: both Prophet and Priest was profane; their wickedness was found even in the house of God. In opposition to all which, God promises by the Prophet, that he would set Shepherds over them, that should feed them; so that the people should have no more reason to be afraid of their Pastors, or of being misled by them; and he promised upon their return from the Captivity, to give them Pastors according to his own heart, who should feed them with knowledge and understanding.*

In *Ezekiel* we find the solemn and severe charge given to *Watchmen*, twice repeated; that they ought to warn the wicked from his wickedness; otherwise, though he should indeed die in his sin, *God* would require his blood at the *Watchman's* hand; but if he gave warning, he had by so doing, delivered his own soul. In that Prophecy we have the guilt of the *Priests* set forth very heinously. *Her Priests have violated my Law, and profaned my holy things; they have put*

put no difference between the holy and profane, the clean, and the unclean, and have hid their eyes from my Sabbaths; the effect of which was, that God was profaned among them. This is more fully prosecuted in the 34th Chap. which is all addressed to the *Shepherds of Israel*. *Woe be to the Shepherds of Israel, that do feed themselves. Should not the Shepherds feed the flock? Ye eat the fat, and ye cloath you with the Wool, ye kill them that are fed, but ye feed not the flock:* v. 3. Then follows an enumeration of the several sorts of troubles that the people were in, under the Figure of a *Flock*, to shew how they had neglected their Duty, in all the parts and instances of it; and had trusted to their Authority, which they had abused to Tyranny and Violence. *The diseased have ye not strengthened, neither have ye healed that which was sick, neither have ye bound up that which was broken, neither have ye brought again that which was driven away, neither have ye sought that which was lost; but with force, and with cruelty have ye ruled them;* upon which follows a terrible Expostulation, and Denunciation of Judgments against them: *I am against the Shepherds, saith the Lord, I will require my flock at their hands, and cause them to cease from feeding the flock; neither shall the Shepherds feed themselves any more.* And in the 34th Chap. of that Prophecy, one Rule is given, which was set up in the Primitive Church; as an unalterable Maxim, That such Priests as had been guilty of Idolatry, should not do the Office of a Priest any more, nor come near to any of the Holy Things, or enter within the Sanctuary, but were still to bear their shame: They might minister in some inferior Services, such as keeping the Gates, or slaying the Sacrifice; but they were still to bear their Iniquity.

I have past over all that occurs in these Prophets, which relates to the *false Prophets*, because I will bring nothing into this Discourse, that relates to Sins of another Order, and Nature. In *Daniel* we have a noble Expression of the value of such as *turn men* Dan. 12. 3. *to Righteousness, That they shall shine as the Stars, for ever and ever.* In *Hosea* we find among the Sins and Calamities of that time, this reckoned as a main cause of that horrid Corruption, under which they had fallen, *there being no truth, no mercy, nor knowledge of God* Hof. 4. 1. *in the land, which was defiled by swearing, lying, killing, stealing and committing Adultery. My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge:* To which is added, *Because thou hast rejected knowledge (or the instructing the People) I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no Priest*

to me; seeing thou hast forgot the Law of thy God; I will also forget thy children. That corrupt Race of Priests attended still upon the Temple, and offered up the Sin-Offering, and feasted upon their Portion; which is wrong rendred, *They eat up the sin of my people*; for sin stands there as in the Law of Moses, for Sin Offering: Because of the advantage this brought them, they were glad at the abounding of Sin, which is expressed by *their setting their heart*, or lifting up their Soul to their iniquity: The Conclusion of which is, that they should be given up for a very heavy curse, of, *Like Priests, like People*. In Joel we find the Duty of the Priests and Ministers of the Lord, set forth in times of great and approaching Calamities, thus, They ought to be Intercessors for the People, and

Joel 2. 17. *to weep between the Porch and the Altar; and say, Spare thy People, and give not thine heritage to reproach, that the Heathen (Strangers and Idolaters) should rule over them: Wherefore should they say among the people, Where is their God? There is in Amos, a very*

ch 3. v. 11. *black Character of a depraved Priesthood, Their Priests teach for hire, and their Prophets divine for money.*

These were the forerunners of the destruction of that Nation: But though it might be expected, that the Captivity should have purged them from their dross, as it did indeed free them from all inclinations to Idolatry; yet other Corruptions had a deeper root.

Zech. 11. 15. We find in Zechary, *a Curse against the Idol Shepherd, who resembled the true Shepherd, as an Idol does the Original: But he was without sense and life. Wo be to the Idol Shepherd that leaveth the Flock: The Curse is figuratively expressed, The sword shall be upon his arm, and his right eye: (the things that he valued most) his arm shall be clean dried up, and his right eye shall be utterly darkned: But this is more copiously set out by Malachi, in an Address made to the*

Mal. 2. 1. *Priests; And now, O ye Priests, this Commandment is for you; If you will not hear, and if you will not lay it to heart, to give Glory unto my Name, I will even send a curse upon you, and I will curse your Blessings; yea I have cursed them already, because ye do not lay it to heart--*

Then the first Covenant with the Tribe of Levi is set forth; *My Covenant was with him, of Life and Peace: The Law of truth was in his mouth, and iniquity was not found in his lips: he walked with me in peace and equity, and did turn many from their iniquity: For the Priests lips should preserve knowledge, and they should seek the Law at his mouth; for he is the messenger of the Lord of Hosts: All this sets*

forth

forth the state of a pure and holy *Priesthood*: But then follow terrible Words; *But ye are departed out of the way, ye have caused many to stumble at the Law: Ye have corrupted the Covenant of Levi, saith the Lord of Hosts. Therefore have I also made you contemptible, and base before all the people; according as ye have not kept my ways, but have been partial in the Law.* Their ill example made many loath both their Law, and their Religion: They had corrupted their Institution, and studied by a gross partiality, to bring the people to be exact in those parts of the Law, in which their Wealth, or their Authority was concerned; while they neglected the more essential and indispensable Duties.

Thus far have I gone over the most important places, that have occurred to me in the *Old-Testament*, relating to this matter; upon all which, I will only add one Remark, That though some exception might be made to those Expressions, that import the Dignity and Sanctification of those who were then consecrated to the Holy Functions, as parts of that instituted Religion, which had its period by the coming of Christ; yet such Passages as relate to Moral Duties, and to the Obligations that arise out of Natural Religion, have certainly a more binding force, and ought to be understood and explained in a more elevated and sublime sense, under the new Dispensation, which is *Internal* and *Spiritual*, compared, to which, the Old is called the *Letter* and the *Flesh*: Therefore the Obligations of the Priests, under the Christian Religion, to a holy strictness of Life and Conversation, to a diligent attendance on their Flock, and for instructing and watching over them, must all be as much higher, and more binding, as this New Covenant cancels the old one.

### CHAP. III.

*Passages out of the New-Testament, relating to the same matter.*

**T**HIS General Consideration receives a vast improvement from the great Example that the Author of our Religion, the great Bishop and Shepherd of our Souls has set us; who went about, ever doing good, to whom it was as his meat and drink, to do the will of his Father that sent him: He was the good Shepherd that  
knew



~~from his sheep,~~ and laid down his Life for them: And since he set such a value on the Souls of that Flock which he hath redeemed, and purchased with his own Blood; certainly those to whom he has committed that *work of reconciliation*, which stood himself so dear, ought to consider themselves under very strict Obligations, by that charge of which they must give a severe account at the great day, in which the Blood of all those who have perished through their neglect and default, shall be required at their hands. Yet because I will not aggravate this Argument unreasonably, I will make no use of those passages which relate immediately to the Apostles: For their Function being extraordinary, as were also the Assistances that were given them for the discharge of it, I will urge nothing that belongs properly to their Mission and Duty.

In the Character that the Gospel gives of the *Priests* and *Pharisees* of that time, we may see a just and true Idea, of the Corruptions into which a bad Clergy is apt to fall; they studied to engross the knowledge of the Law to themselves; and to keep the People in Ignorance, and in a blind dependance upon them: They were zealous in lesser matters, but neglected the great things of the Law: They put on an outward appearance of strictness, but under that there was much rottenness: They studied to make Profelites to their Religion, but they had so depraved it, that they became thereby worse men than before: They made great shews of Devotion, of Praying, and Fasting much, and giving Alms: But all this was to be seen of men, and by it they devoured the Estates of poor and simple people: They were very strict in observing the Traditions and Customs of their Fathers, and of every thing that contributed to their own Authority or Advantage; but by so doing they made void the Law of God: In a word, they had no true worth in themselves, and hated such as had it: They were proud and spiteful, false and cruel, and made use of the credit they were in with the people, by their complying with them in their Vices, and flattering them with false hopes to set them on to destroy all those who discovered their Corruptions, and whose real and shining worth, made their counterfeit shew of it the more conspicuous and odious. In this short view of those enormous Disorders, which then reigned amongst them, we have a full Picture of the corrupt state of bad Priests, in all Ages and Religions, with this only difference, That the *Priests* in our Saviour's time were more careful



careful and exact in the External and Visible parts of their Conversation, than they have been in other times: in which they have thrown off the very decencies of a grave and sober Deportment.

But now to go on with the Characters and Rules that we find in the *New Testament*: our Saviour as he compared the Work of the Gospel, in many parables to a *Field* and *Harvest*, he so calls those whom his Father was to send, *the Labourers in that Harvest*, and he left a direction to all his Followers to *pray to his Father that he would send Labourers into his Harvest*. Out of which both the Vocation and Divine Mission of the Clergy, and the Prayers of the Church to God for it, that are among us fixed to the *Ember Weeks*, have been gathered by many pious Writers. In the warnings that our Saviour gives to prepare for his second coming, we find the Characters of good and bad Clergy-men stated, in opposition to one another, under the Figure of *Stewards*, the good are both *wise and faithful*, they wait for his coming, and in the mean while are *dividing to every one of their fellow Servants his portion to eat in due Season*, that is their proportion both of the Doctrine and Mysteries of the Gospel, according to their several capacities and necessities: but the bad *Stewards* are those who put the evil day far from them, and *say in their heart the Lord declareth his coming*, upon which they eat, drink, and are drunken: they indulge their sensual Appetites even to a scandalous excess, and as for their fellow Servants, instead of feeding, of instructing, or watching over them, they *beat them*: they exercise a Violent and Tyrannical Authority over them. Their state in the next World is represented as different as their behaviour in this was, the one shall be exalted from being a Steward to be a *Ruler over the Household*, to be a *King and a Priest for ever unto God*, whereas the other shall be cut asunder, and shall have his portion with Unbelievers.

The 10th. of St. *John* is the place which both Fathers, and more modern Writers have chiefly made use of to shew the difference between good and bad Pastors. The good *Shepherds* enter *by the Door*, and *Christ is this Door* by whom they must

enter; that is from whom they must have their Vocation and Mission: but the *Thief and Rober* who comes to *kill, steal, and destroy, climbeth up some other way*: whatever he may do in the ritual way for forms sake, he has in his Heart no regard to *Jesus Christ*, to the Honour of his Person, the Edification of his Church or the Salvation of Souls; he intends only to raise and enrich himself: and so he compasses that, he cares not how many Souls perish by his means, or thorough his neglect. *The good Shepherd knows his Sheep so well, that he can call them by name, and lead them out and they hear his voice: but the Hireling careth not for the Sheep, he is a Stranger to them, they know not his voice and will not follow him.* This is urged by all, who have pressed the obligation of *Residence*, and of the personal Labours of the Clergy, as a plain divine and indispensable precept: and even in the *Council of Trent*, tho' by the Practices of the Court of *Rome*, it was diverted from declaring *Residence* to be of *Divine Right*, the decree that was made to enforce it, urges this place to shew the Obligation to it. The *good Shepherd feeds the Flock*, and looks for *Pasture* for them; and is *ready to give his Life for the Sheep*: but the bad Shepherd is represented as a *Hireling that careth not for the Flock, that sees the Wolfe coming, and upon that leaveth the Sheep and fleeth*. This is, it is true, a Figure, and therefore I know it is thought an ill way of reasoning to build too much upon figurative Discourses: yet on the other hand our Saviour having delivered so great a part of his Doctrine in Parables, we ought at least to consider the main Scope of a Parable: and may well build upon that, tho' every particular Circumstance in it cannot bear an Argument.

I shall add but one passage more from the *Gospels*, which is much made use of, by all that have writ of this matter. When our Saviour confirmed *St. Peter* in his Apostleship, from which he had fallen by his denying of him, as in the Charge which he thrice repeated of *feeding his Lambs and his Sheep*, he pursues still the Figure of a *Shepherd*; to the question that he asked preparatory to it, was *Simon lovest thou me more than these*, from which they justly gather, that the *Love of God*, a Zeal for his Honour,

Honour, and a preferring of that to all other things whatso-  
ever, is a necessary and indispensable qualification for that Holy  
Employment; which distinguishes the true *Shepherd* from the  
*Hireling*: and by which only he can be both animated and  
fortified, to go through with the labours and difficulties, as  
well as the dangers and sufferings which may accompany it.

When *St. Paul* was leaving his last charge with the *Bishops*  
that met him at *Ephesus*, he still makes use of the same Meta-  
phor of *Shepherd* in those often cited words, *Take heed to your* 20 A. 128.  
*selves and to all the Flock over which the Holy Ghost hath made*  
*you Bishops or Overseers. to feed the Church of God. which he hath*  
*purchased with his own Blood.* The words are solemn, and the  
consideration enforcing them is a mighty one; they import  
the Obligations of the Clergy, both to an exactness in their  
own Deportment, and to earnest and constant labours, in imi-  
tation of the Apostle, who during the three Years of his stay  
among them, had been *serving God with all humility of mind, with* V. 19.  
*many tears and temptations. and had not ceased to warn every one*  
*both night and day, with tears: and had taught them both publickly,* V. 20.  
*and from House to House:* Upon which he leaves them, calling  
them all to witness that *he was pure from the Blood of all Men.* V. 26.  
There has been great disputing concerning the Persons to  
whom these words were addressed; but if all Parties had  
studied more to follow the Example here proposed, and the  
Charge that is here given; which are plain and easie to be un-  
derstood, then to be contending about things that are more  
doubtful; the good Lives and the faithful Labours of Aposto-  
lical Bishops, would have contributed more both to the edify-  
ing and healing of the Church, than all their Arguments or  
Reasonings will ever be able to do.

*St. Paul* reckoning up to the *Romans* the several Obligations  
of Christians of all ranks, to assiduity and diligence, in their  
callings and labours, among others he numbers these, *Ministers* Rom. 12. 7.  
*let us wait on our ministering, or he that teacheth on teaching he that*  
*ruleth with diligence:* In his *Epistle* to the *Corinthians*, as he  
states the Dignity of the Clergy in this, that they ought to be  
accounted of as the *Ministers of Christ, and Stewards of the My-* 1 Cor. 4. 2.

*Steries of God. He adds that it is required in Stewards that a Man be found faithful. In that Epistle, he sets down that perpetual Law, which is the Foundation of all the Provision that*  
*1 Cor. 9. 14. has been made for the Clergy, That the Lord hath ordained that they which preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel. But if upon that, the Laity have looked on themselves as bound to appoint so plentiful a Supply, that the Clergy might have whereon to live at their ease and in abundance; then certainly this was intended that they being freed from the troubles and cares of*  
*Mat. 6. 4. this World, might attend continually on the Ministry of the Word of God and on Prayer. Those who do that Work negligently, provoke the Laity to repent of their bounty and to defraud them of it. For certainly there are no such Enemies to the Patrimony and Rights of the Church, as those who eat the Fat but do not preach the Gospel, nor feed the Flock. Happy on the other hand are they, to whom that Character, which the A-*  
*1 Cor. 4. 1, 2. postle assumes to himself, and to Timothy, does belong; Therefore seeing we have received this ministry, as we have received mercy we faint not: but have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the Truth, commending our selves to every man's Conscience in the sight of God. In the Epistle to*  
*4 Eph. 11. the Ephesians, we have the ends of the Institution of all the*  
*12, 13. Ranks of Clergy-men set forth in these words. He gave some Apostles, and some Prophets, and some Evangelists, and some Pastors and Teachers: for the perfecting of the Saints for the Work of the Ministry, for the edifying the Body of Christ: till we all come in the Unity of the Faith, and of the Knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. In these words we see something that is vast and noble, so far above those slight and poor performances, in which the far greater part do too easily satisfy themselves; that in charity to them we ought to suppose that they have reflected sufficiently on the Importance of them. Otherwise they would have in some sort proportioned their labours to those great designs for which they are ordained; and would remember the Charge given to the Colossians, to say to Archip-*  
*pus,*



pus, who it seems was remiss in the discharge of his duty, *Take heed to the Ministry which thou hast received in the Lord, that thou fulfill it.* 4 Col. 17.

The *Epistles* to *Timothy* and *Titus* are the Foundation of all the *Canons of the Church*, in these we have the Characters of *Bishops*, and *Deacons*, as well as the duties belonging to those Functions, so particularly set forth that from thence alone every one who will weigh them well, may find sufficient Instruction, *how he ought to behave himself in the House of God.* In these we see what patterns those of the Clergy ought to be in *Word* (or *Doctrine*) in *Conversation*, in *Charity*, in *Spirit*, in *Faith*, and in *Purity*, they ought to give attendance to reading, to exhortation, and to doctrine, that is both to the instructing and exhorting of their People. They ought not to neglect that gift that was given to them, by the laying on of hands, they ought to meditate on these things, to give themselves wholly to them, that so their profiting may appear unto all: and to take heed to themselves and their Doctrine; and to continue in them: for in so doing they shall both save themselves and those that hear them. Those that govern the Church are more particularly charged, before God, the Lord Jesus and the Holy Angels, that they observe these things without preferring one before another, doing nothing by partiality, by Domestick regards, the considerations of Friendship, Intercession, or Importunity: and above all that they lay hand suddenly on no man; to which are added words of great terror, neither be thou partaker of other mens sins: keep thyself pure. Which ought to make great Impression, on all those with whom the Power of Ordination is lodged: since they do plainly import, that such as do ordain any rashly without due enquiry, and a strict examination, entitle themselves to all the scandal they give; and become partners of their guilt: which if well considered, must needs make all such, as are not past feeling, use great care and caution in this sacred Trust. *Bishops* are the Depositaries of the *Faith*, which they are to keep pure; and to hand down faithfully according to these words, *And the things which thou hast heard of me among many witnesses, the same commit thou to faithful men who may be able to teach* 1 Tim. 4. 12, 13, 14. 15, 16. 1 Tim. 5. 21, 22. 2 Tim. 2. 2. 3. 4.



teach others also: upon this he prepares the Bishop for difficulties to endure hardness as a good Souldier of Jesus Christ. And according to that Figure, since those that go to war, do not carry unnecessary burdens with them, which may encumber and retard their march, he adds, *no man that warreth entangleth himself with the Affairs of this life, that he may please him who hath chosen him for a Souldier*; upon this it is that all those *Canons*, which have been made in so many Ages of the Church, against Church-mens meddling with secular Affairs, have been founded; than which we find nothing more frequently provided against, both in the *Apstolical Canons*, in those of *Antioch*, in those made by the General Council of *Calcedon*, and in divers of the Councils of *Carthage*: but this abuse had too deep a root in the nature of man, to be easily cured. St. Paul does also in this place carry on the Metaphor to express the earnestness and indefatigableness of Clergy-mens Zeal, that as Officers in an Army were satisfied with nothing under *Victory*, which brought them the Honours of a Triumph, so we ought to *fight*, not only so as to earn our pay, but for *Mastery* to spoil and overcome the Powers of darkness; yet even this must *be done lawfully*, not by deceiving the People with pious frauds, hoping that our good Intentions will atone for our taking bad methods: War has its Laws as well as Peace, and those who manage this Spiritual warfare, ought to keep themselves within the Instructions and Commands that are given them. Then the *Apostle* changing the Figure from the *Souldier* to the *Workman* and *Steward* says, *study to shew thy self approved unto God* (not to seek the vain applauses of men, but to prefer to all other things the witness of a good Conscience, and that in simplicity and godly sincerity, he may walk and labour as in the sight of God) *a Workman that needeth not to be ashamed*; *rightly dividing the word of Truth*: This is according to the Figure of a *Steward*, giving every one his due portion; and a little after comes a noble Admonition, relating to the meekness of the Clergy towards those that divide from them: *The Servant of the Lord must strive; but be gentle to all men, apt to teach, patient, in meekness, instructing those*  
that

that oppose themselves, if peradventure God will give them repentance, to the acknowledging the Truth This is the Passage that was chiefly urged by our Reformers against the Persecution that the Roman Clergy did every where set on against them: The extent of it ought to be well considered, that so it may not be said, that we are only against persecution when it lies on our selves; for if it is a good defence to some, it is as good to others; unless we own that we do not govern our selves by that rule of *doing to others that which we would have others do to us*. In the next Chapter, we find the right Education of this Bishop, and that which furnishes a Clergy man, to perform all the duties incumbent on him: *From a Child thou hast known the Holy Scriptures, which are able* <sup>2 Tim. 3, 15</sup> *to make thee wise unto Salvation, through faith in Christ Jesus: That is the Old Testament well studied, by one that believed Jesus to be the Messiah, and that was led into it by that Faith, did discover to a Man the great Oeconomy of God in the Progress of the Light, which he made shine upon the World by degrees, unto the perfect day of the appearing of the Sun of Righteousness) and to this he adds a noble Character of the inspired Writings: All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for Doctrine, for reproof, for* <sup>V. 16, 17.</sup> *correction, for instructing in righteousness, that the Man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. The Apostle goes on and gives Timothy the most solemn Charge that can be set out in words; which if understood, as belonging to all Bishops, as the whole Church of God has ever done, must be read by them with trembling. I charge thee therefore before* <sup>2 Tim. 4.</sup> *God, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall judge the quick and dead* <sup>1, 2.</sup> *at his appearing, and his Kingdom, preach the Word, be Instant in Season out of Season, reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long suffering and doctrine (that is with great gentleness in the manner, and clearness and strength in the matter of their Instructions) and a little after, watch them in all things, endure affliction, do the work of an Evangelist: make full proof of (or fulfill) thy Ministry: And as a consideration to enforce this the more, he tells what a noble and agreeable prospect he*  
had

- v. 6. had in the View of his approaching dissolution: *The time of his departing drew nigh, he was ready to be offered up, as a Sacrifice for that Faith which he had so zealously and so successfully preached: and here we have his two great preparatives for Martyrdom: The one was in looking on*
- v. 7. *his past life and labours: I have fought a good Fight, I have finished my Course, I have kept the Faith.* The other was in looking forward to the Reward, *that Crown of Righteousness which was laid up for him, which the Lord the Righteous Judge would give him at that day: and not only to him, but also to all those that loved his appearing.* and certainly more especially to those who not only loved it themselves, but who laboured so as to dispose others also to love it. To all these considerations, though nothing needed to have been added, to one upon whom they made so strange an impression, as they did upon *Timothy*, yet one comes after all, which ought to teach us to work out our Salvation with fear and trembling since *St. Paul* tells *Timothy* that *Demas*, one of the Companions of his labours, had forsaken him, and that which prevailed over him was *the Love of this present World.*
- v. 8.

These are the Rules and Charges given by *St. Paul* to *Timothy*, and in him to all the Bishops and Pastors that were to come after him in the Church. Some of these are again repeated in his *Epistle to Titus*, where we have the Characters set out; by which he was to prepare and examine those *Elders or Bishops*, who were to rule the House of God: that those being well chosen, they might be able by sound Doctrine both to exhort and convince the Gainsayers, and that he might do his duty with the more advantage; he charges

1 Tit. 6. him to shew himself in all things a pattern of good Works: in

2 Tit. 7. 8. Doctrine, shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity; and using such sound Speech as could not be condemned: that so those who were of the contrary Party (the Judaizers who were studying to corrupt the Christian Religion by making a medley of it and Judaism) might have no evil thing to say of him: and after a glorious but short Abstract of the design of their holy Religion; he concludes that part of the *Epistle* in these words,

These

*These things speak and exhort, and rebuke with all authority : to which he adds a Charge, that may seem more proper to be addressed to others, then to himself, let no man despise thee : V. 15.* The same is likewise in his *Epistle to Timothy*, with this Addition, *let no man despise thy youth* : but these words do import <sup>1 Tim. 4. 12.</sup> that it is in a Bishop's own Power, to procure due Esteem to himself; at least to prevent contempt; since a holy and exemplary Deportment, and faithful and constant labours never fail to do that. In the Conclusion of the *Epistle to the Hebrews*, we find both the Characters of those who had laboured among them, and had ruled them, but who were then dead; and also of such as were yet alive. <sup>13 Heb. 7.</sup> *Remember them who had the rule over you; who have spoken to you the Word of God, whose Faith follow, considering the end of their conversation* : they had both lived and died, as well as laboured in such a manner, that the Remembring of what had appeared in them, was an effectual means of perswading the *Hebrews* to be steady in the Christian Religion : for certainly, though while a man lives let him be ever so eminent, there is still room for ill-nature and jealousy to misrepresent things, and to suspect that something lies hid under the fairest appearances: which may shew it self in due time; all that goes off, when one has finished his course, so that all appears to be of a piece, and that he has died as he had lived. Then the Argument from his conversation appears in its full strength, without any diminution. But the charge given with relation to those who then had the rule over them is no less remarkable, *Obeys them that have the rule over you; and submit yourselves, for they watch for your Souls; as they that must give account : that they may do it with joy and not with grief: for that is unprofitable for you* : Here Obedience and Submission is enjoined, upon the account of their *Rulers watching over them, and for them* : and therefore those who do not watch like Men that know that they must give account of that Trust, have no reason to expect these from their People : Of a piece with this is *St. Paul's* charge to the *Thessalonians*, *we beseech you to know (or to acknowledge,) them which labour among you, and that*



are over you in the Lord, and admonish you, and to esteem them very highly in love, for their works sake : Here both the Submission and Esteem, as well as the acknowledgment that is due to the Clergy, is said to be for *their works sake* : And therefore such as do not the work and that do not labour and admonish their People, have no just claim to them. There is another expression in the 2d. *Epistle* to the *Thessalonians*, that is much urged by those who have writ on this Head, *That if any will not work he should not eat*, which if it is a Rule binding all Men, seems to lie much heavier on the Clergy.

I shall conclude all that I intend to bring out of the Scripture upon this Argument, with St. *Peter's* charge to the *Elders* of the Churches, to which he writ ; which is indeed so full, that though in the Course of the *New Testament*, it had not lain last, it deserved by the Rules of Method, to be kept last ; for the closing and enforcing all that has gone before, and for giving it its full weight. St. *Peter* descends 1. *Epistle* 5 ch. 1 ver to a level with them, calling himself no better than a fellow Elder and a Witness of the suffering of Christ : And also a Partaker of the Glory which was to be revealed. Feed the Flock of God (says he) which is among you, (these words will bear another rendring as much as lieth in you) taking the oversight thereof not by constraint (as forced to it by Rules, Canons, or Laws) but willingly not for filthy lucre (for though God has ordained that such as preach the Gospel should live of the Gospel ; yet those who propose that to themselves as the chief Motive in entring into Holy Orders, are hereby severely condemned) but of a ready mind, neither as being Lords over God's Heritage (or not using a despotick Authority over their several lots or divisions) but being examples to the Flock, not tyrannizing it over their People : But acquiring their Authority chiefly by their own exemplary conversation. The conclusion of the Charge, is suitable to the solemnity of it in these words : And when the Chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall likewise receive a Crown of Glory that fadeth not away.

With this I make an end of Citations from Scripture : I think it is as plain as words can make any thing, that  
such



such as are dedicated to the service of God and of his Church, ought to labour constantly and faithfully : And that in their own Persons. For it is not possible to express a personal Obligation, in terms that are both more strict and more solemn than these are which have been cited, and all the returns of obedience and submission, of esteem and support, being declared to be due to them on the account of their *watching over and feeding the Flock of God*, those who pretend to these, without considering themselves as under the other Obligations, are guilty of the worst sort of *Sacrilege*, in devouring the things that are *Sacred*, without doing those duties for which these are due, and what right soever the Law of the Land may give them to them, yet certainly according to the Divine Law those who do not wait *at the Altar*, ought <sup>Cor. 9 3,</sup> *not to be partakers with the Altar* : <sup>14.</sup> *Those who do not minister about holy things, ought not to live of the things of the Temple : Nor ought those who do not preach the Gospel, live of the Gospel.* If I had a mind to make a great shew of reading, or to Triumph in my Argument with the Pomp of Quotations, it were very easie to bring a Cloud of Witnesses to confirm the Application that I have made of these passages of Scripture : Indeed all those who have either writ Commentaries on the Scriptures, ancient and modern, or have left Homilies on these subjects, have pressed this matter so much, that every one that has made any progress in Ecclesiastical learning, must know that one might soon stuff a great many Pages with abundance of Quotations out of the Authors, both of the best, and of the worst Ages of the Church : not only the Fathers, but even the Schoolmen, and which is more the Canonist have carried this matter very high, and have even delivered it as a *Maxime*, that all dispensations that are procured upon undue Pretences, the chief of which they reckon the giving a Man, an easie and large subsistence, are null and void of themselves : And conclude that how strong soever they may be in Law, yet they are nothing in Conscience : And that they do not free a Man from his Obligations to *Residence and Labour* : And they

they do generally conclude that he who upon a Dispensation, which has been obtained upon Carnal accounts. such as Birth, Rank or great Abilities, (and qualifications are not yet so good as these) does not *Reside*, is bound in Conscience to restore the Fruits of a Benefice which he has thus enjoyed with a bad Conscience without performing the duty belonging to it, in his own Person. But though it were very easie to bring out a great deal to this purpose, I will go no further at present upon this Head: The *words of God*, seem to be so exprefs and positive, that such as do not yield to so undisputable an Authority, will be little moved by all that can be brought out of Authors of a lower Form, against whom it will be easie to muster up many exceptions, if they will not be determined by so many of the *Oracles of the living God*.

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#### C H A P. IV.

##### *Of the Sense of the Primitive Church in this Matter.*

I will not enter here into any Historical Account of the Discipline of the Church, during the first and best Ages of Christianity. It is the glory of this Church, that in her disputes of both hands, as well with those of the *Church of Rome*, as with those that *separate* from her, she has both the Doctrine and the Constitution of the Primitive Church of her side. But this Plea would be more entire and less disputable, if our Constitution were not only in its main and most essential parts, formed upon that glorious Model; but were also in its Rules and Administrations, made more exactly conformable to those best and purest times. I can never forget an advice that was given me above thirty years ago, by one of the worthiest Clergy men now alive; while I was studying the Controversie relating to the Government of the Church, from the Primitive Times, he desires me to joyn with  
the

the more Speculative Discoveries, that I should make, the Sense that they had of the Obligations of the Clergy, both with relation to their Lives, and to their Labours: And said that the Argument in favour of the Church, how clearly soever made out, would never have its full effect upon the World, till abuses were so far corrected, that we could shew a Primitive Spirit in our Administration, as well as a Primitive pattern for our Constitution. This made even then, deep Impressions on me, and I thank God the Sense of it has never left me in the whole course of my Studies.

I will not at present enter upon so long and so Invidious a work as the descending into all the particulars, into which this matter might be branched out; either from the Writings of the *Fathers*, the Decrees of *Councils*, the *Roman Law* and the *Capitulars*, or even from the dreg of all, the *Canon Law* it self, which though a Collection made in one of the worst Ages, yet carries many rules in it, that would seem excessively severe, even to us, after all our Reformation of Doctrine and Worship. This has been already done with so much exactness, that it will not be necessary to set about it after the *Harvest*, which was gathered by the learned Bishop of *Spalato* in the last Book of his great Work: which the Pride and Inconstancy of the Author, had brought under a disesteem, that it no way deserves: For whatever he might be, that work was certainly one of the best productions of that Age. But this design has been prosecuted of late with much more exactness and learning, and with great honesty and fidelity, where the interest of his Church did not force him to use a little Art, by *F. Thomassin*, who has compared the modern and the ancient Discipline, and has shewed very copiously, by what steps the Change was made; and how abuses crept into the Church. It is a work of great use, to such as desire to understand that matter truly. I will refer the curious to these, and many other lesser Treaties, writ by the *Jansenists* in *France*, in which abuses are very honestly complained off, and proper Remedies are proposed; which in many places being entertained by Bishops, that had a right Sense of the Primitive Rules, have given the Rise to a great Reformation of the *French Clergy*. Instead

Instead then of any Historical deduction of these matters, I shall content my self with giving the Sense of *two* of the *Fathers* of the *Greek Church*, and *one* of the *Latin* upon this whole business, of the Obligations of the Clergy. The first is *Gregory* of *Nazianze* whose Father ordained him a *Presbyter*, notwithstanding all his humble *Intercessions* to the contrary, according to the custom of the best Men of that Age; who instead of pressing into Orders, or aspiring to them, fled from them, excused themselves, and judging themselves unworthy of so holy a Character and so high a Trust, were not without difficulty prevailed on to submit to that, which in degenerate Ages Men run to as to a subsistence, or the mean of procuring it, and seem to have no other Sense of that Sacred Institution, then *Mechanicks* have of obtaining their Freedom in that Trade or Company in which they have passed their Apprenticeship. It were indeed happy for the Church, if those who offer themselves to Orders, had but such a Sense of them as *Tradesmen* have of their *Freedom*: Who do not pretend to it till they have finished the time prescribed; and are in some sort qualified to set up in it: Whereas, alas! men who neither know the *Scriptures*, nor the body of *Divinity*, who have made no progress in their Studies, and can give no tollerable account of that holy Doctrine, in which they desire to be Teachers, do yet with equal degrees of confidence, and importunity, pretend to this Character, and find the way to it too easie, and the access of it too free. But this Holy Father had a very different sense of this matter. He had indeed submitted to his Fathers Authority, he being his Bishop as well as his Father. But immediately after he was ordained, he gives this account of himself in his *Apologetical Oration*, That he judging he had not that *sublimity of Vertue*, nor that *familiar acquaintance with divine matters*, which became *Pastors and Teachers*; he therefore intending to purifie his own Soul to higher degrees of *Vertue*, to an *Exaltation* above sensible Objects, above his Body and above the World, that so he might bring his mind to a recollected and divine State, and fit his Soul that as a polished mirror it might carry on it the Impressions of divine Ideas unmixed with the alloy of earthly Objects, and might  
be



*be still casting a brightness upon all his Thoughts, did in order to the raising himself to that, retire to the Wilderness. He had observed that many pressed to handle the holy Mysteries, with unwashed hands, and defiled Souls: And before they were meet to be initiated to the divine Vocation, were crowding about the Altar, not to set patterns to others, but designing only a subsistence to themselves: reckoning that the holy dignity, was not a Trust for which an account was to be given, but a state of Authority and Exemption. They had neither piety nor parts to recommend them, but were the reproaches of the Christian Religion and were the Pests of the Church: Which infected it faster than any plague could do the Air, since Men did easily run to imitate bad Examples but were drawn off very hardly by the perfectest patterns to the practice of Vertue. Upon which he formed a high Idea of the eminent worth and virtues which became those who governed the Church: And of the great Progress that they ought to be daily making not contented with low measures of it, as if they were to weigh it critically in nice ballances; and not to rise up to the highest degrees possible in it. Yet even this, was not all: For to govern mankind which was so various, and so uncertain a sort of Creature, seemed to him the highest pitch of knowledge and wisdom, as far above that skill and labour that is necessary to the curing of bodily Diseases as the Soul is superiour to the Body, and yet since so much Study and Observation was necessary to make a Man a skillful Physician, he concluded that much more was necessary for the Spiritual Medicine: The design of which was to give Wings to the Soul, to raise it above the World, and to consecrate it to God, here he runs out into a noble rapture, upon the excellence and sublimity of the Christian Religion, and upon the art of governing Souls, of the different methods to be taken, according to the diversity of mens capacity and tempers: and of dividing the word of God aright, among them. The difficulties of which he prosecutes in a great variety of sublime Expressions and Figures: but concludes lamenting that there was so little order, then observed, that men had scarce passed their Childhood when, before they understood the Scriptures, not to say before they had washed off the spots and defilements of their Souls, if they had learned but two or three pious words, which they had got by heart, or had read some of the Psalms of David, and put on an outward garb that carried an appearance of piety in it, these men were presently pushed on by the Vanity*

*of*



of their minds, to aspire to the Government of the Church. To such Persons he addresses himself very Rhetorically and asks them, *what they thought of the commonest employments such as the playing on Instruments or of dancing, in comparison with Divine Wisdom: For acquiring the one they know great pains and much practice was necessary: could they then imagin that the other should be so easily attained: but he adds that one may as well sow upon Rocks, and talk to the deaf, as hope to work upon Persons, who have not yet got to that degree of Wisdom, of being sensible of their own ignorance. This evil he had often with many tears lamented, but the pride of such men was so great, that nothing under the Authority of a St. Peter or a St. Paul, could work upon them. Upon this mention of St. Paul, he breaks out into a rapture, upon his labours and sufferings, and the care of all the Churches that lay on him; his becoming all things to all men, his gentleness where that was necessary, and his authority upon other occasions, his zeal, his patience, his constancy, and his prudence in fulfilling all the parts of his Ministry. Then he cites several of the Passages of the Prophets, particularly those of *Jeremy and Ezekiel, Zachary and Malachi*, which relate to the corruptions of the Priests and Shepherds of Israel. And shews how applicable they were to the Clergy at that time, and that all the woes denounced against the Scribes and Pharisees belonged to them, with heavy aggravations. These thoughts possessed him day and night; they did eat out his very strength and substance; they did so afflict and deject him, and gave him so terrible a Prospect of the Judgments of God, which they were drawing down upon the Church, that he instead of daring to undertake any part of the Government of it, was only thinking how he should cleanse his own Soul and fly from the wrath, which was to come, and could not think that he was yet while so young, meet to handle the Holy Things. Where he runs out into a new Rapture in magnifying the dignity of holy Functions, and upon that says, that tho' he had been dedicated to God from his Mothers Womb, and had renounced the World and all that was charming in it, even Eloquence it self and had delighted long in the Study of the Scriptures and had subdued many of his Appetites and Passions, yet after all this, in which perhaps he had become a Fool in glorying, he had so high a*

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Nation of the care and government of Souls, that he thought it above his strength; especially in such bad times in which all things were out of order: Factions were formed, and Charity was lost; so that the very Name of a Priest was a Reproach, as if God had poured out Contempt upon them: and thereby impious Men daily blasphemed his Name. And indeed, all the shew of Religion that remained was in their mutual heats and animosities, concerning some matters of Religion; they condemned and censured one another, they cherished and made use of the worst Men, so they were true to their Party; they concealed their Crimes, nay, they flattered and defended some that should not have been suffered to enter into the Sanctuary: They gave the holy things to Dogs, while they enquired very narrowly into the failings of those that differed from them, not that they might lament them, but that they might reproach them for them. The same faults which they excused in some, were declaimed against in others: So that the very Name of a good or a bad Man were not now considered, as the Characters of their Lives, but of their being of or against a side. And these abuses were so Universal, that they were like People like Priest: If those heats had arisen upon the great Heads of Religion, he should have commended the Zeal of those who had contended for the Truth, and should have studied to have followed it. But their disputes were about small Matters, and things of no consequence; and yet even these were sought for, under the Glorious Title of the Faith, tho the root of all was Men's private Animosities: These things had exposed the Christian Religion to the hatred of the Heathen, and had given even the Christians themselves very hard Thoughts of the Clergy: This was grown to that height, that they were then acted and represented upon the Stage; and made the Subject of the Peoples scorn. So that by their means, the name of God was blasphemed: This was that which gave him much sadder Apprehensions, than all that could be feared from that wild Beast, that was then beginning to vex and persecute the Church, (by which probably Julian is meant,) the comfortable prospect of dying for the name of Christ, made, that a Persecution was not so dreadful a thing, in his account, as the Sins, the Divisions, and Distractions of Christians. This then was the reason that had made him fly to the Wilderness, for the state of the Church had made him despond, and lose all his courage: He had also gone thi-

ther, that he might quite break himself to all his Appetites and Passions, and to all the Pleasures and Concerns of this Life, that did darken the shinings of the Divine Image upon his Soul; and the emanations of the Heavenly Light. When he considered the Judgments of God upon *bad Priests* and many other strict Rules in the old Dispensation, and the great Obligations that lay upon those who were the *Priests* of the living God, and that ought before they presumed to offer up other Sacrifices, to begin with the Oblation of themselves to God; he was upon all these Reasons moved to prepare himself, by so long a Retreat.

I have given this long Abstract of his *Apologetical Oration*, not only to set before my Reader the Sense that he had of the sacred Functions, but likewise to shew what were the Corruptions of that Age, and with how much Freedom this Holy Father laid them open. If there is any occasion for applying any part of this to the present Age, or to any Persons in it, I chose rather to offer it in the Words of this great Man, than in any of my own. I wish few were concerned in them; and that such as are, would make a due Application of them to themselves, and save others the trouble of doing it more severely.

I go next to another *Father* of the *Greek Church*, *S. Chrysostome*, whose Books of the *Priesthood*, have been ever reckoned among the best pieces of *Antiquity*. The Occasion of writing them, was this: He had lived many years in great Friendship with one *Basil*; at last, they having both dedicated themselves to sacred Studies, the Clergy of *Antioch* had resolved to lay hold on them, and to use that Holy Violence, which was in those times often done to the best Men, and to force them to enter into *Orders*. Which when *Basil* told *Chrysostome*, he concealed his own Intentions, but pressed *Basil* to submit to it, who from that, believing that his Friend was of the same Mind, did not go out of the way, and so he was laid hold on; but *Chrysostome* had hid himself. *Basil*, seeing he could not be found, did all that was possible to excuse himself: but that not being accepted of, he was ordained: Next time that he met his Friend, he expostulated severely with him for having forsaken him upon that Occasion: This gave the Occasion to those Books, which are pursued in the way of a Dialogue.

The first-Book contains only the preparatory Discourses, according to the Method of such Writings. In the 2d. he runs out to shew from our Saviour's Words to St. Peter, *Simon lovest thou me?* 'What tender and fervent Love both to Christ and to his Church, a Priest ought to feel in himself before he enters upon the feeding those *Sheep*, which Christ *has purchased with his own Blood*. To lose the Souls of the *Flock* first, and then ones own Soul, for his Remissness, was no light matter. To have both the Powers of Darkeness, and the Works of the Flesh to fight against, required no ordinary measure both of strength and courage. He pursues the Allegories of a *Shepherd* and a *Physician*, to shew by the Parallel of these laid together; the labours and difficulties of the *Priesthood*, especially, when this Authority was to be maintained only by the strength of Persuasion; and yet sometimes severe methods must be taken; like Incisions to prevent Gangrenes, or to cut off a Part already corrupted. In the managing this, great Art and Prudence was necessary: a Bishop ought to have a great and generous, a patient and undaunted Mind: Therefore, *Chrysostome* says that he found, tho he truly loved his Saviour, yet he was so afraid to offend him, that he durst not undertake a Charge, that he did not yet judge himself qualified for. It was not enough that a Man was tolerably well esteemed by others: He ought to examine himself; for that of a Bishop's being *well reported of*, is but one of many Characters, declared necessary by S. Paul. He complains much that those who raised Men to Orders, had more regard to *rank* and *wealth*, and to much time spent in a vain search into *profane Learning* (tho Christ chose Fisher-men and Tent-makers) than to true Worth, and an earnest Zeal for the real good of the Church. In the 3d. Book, he runs out with a great compass on the praises of the *Priestly Function*; he looked upon it as a dignity raised far above all the Honours of this VWorld, and approaching to the Angelical Glory. A Priest ought to aspire to a Purity above that of other Mortals, answering that of Angels. VVhen a Priest performs the Holy Functions, is sanctifying the Ho-



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 ly Eucharist, and is offering a Crucified Christ to the People, his thoughts should carry him Heavenwards, and as it were translate him into those upper Regions. If the *Mosaic Priest* was to be *Holy* that offered up Sacrifices of a lower Order, how much *Holier* ought the *Priests* of this Religion to be, to whom Christ has given the Power both of retaining and forgiving of Sins: But if *S. Paul*, after all his Visions and Labours, after all his Raptures and Sufferings, yet was inwardly burnt up with the concerns of the Church, and laboured with much fear and trembling, how much greater Apprehensions ought other Persons to have of such a Trust. If it were enough to be called to this Function, and to go through with the Duties incumbent on it in some tolerable manner, the danger were not great; but when the Duty as well as Dignity, together with the Danger belonging to it, are all laid together, a Man is forced to have other Thoughts of the matter. No Man that knows he is not capable of conducting a Ship, will undertake it, let him be pressed to it never so much: Ambitious Men that loved to set themselves forward, were of all others the most exposed to Temptations: They were apt to be inflamed by the smallest Provocations, to be glad at the faults of others, and troubled if they saw any do well; they courted Applause, and aspired to Honour; they fawned on great Persons, and trod on those that were below them; they made base Submissions, undecent Addresses, and often brought Presents to those in Authority; they durst not in any sort reprove them for their Faults, tho they reproached the poor out of measure for their failings. These were not the natural Consequences of the Dignity of the Priesthood; but unworthy and defiled Persons, who with out true Merit, had been advanced to it, had brought it under Reproach. There had been no due care used in the choice of Bishops; and by the means of bad choices, the Church was almost ruined, through the gross Ignorance and Unworthiness of many in that Post. Certainly, a worthy Priest has no ambitious aspirations: Those who fly to this Dignity from that base Principle, will give



a full vent to it, when they have attained it. If Submissi-  
 ons, Flatteries, and Money it self, are necessary, all will  
 be employed: Therefore it was an indispensable Preparati-  
 on to it, that one should be duly sensible of the greatness  
 the Trust, and of his own Unfitness for it; that so he  
 might neither vehemently desire it, nor be uneasy if he  
 should happen to be turned out of it. A Man may de-  
 sire the Office of a Bishop, when he considers it as a Work  
 of toyl and labour, but nothing is more pestiferous than  
 to desire it, because of the Power and Authority that accom-  
 panies it: Such Persons can never have the Courage that  
 ought to shew it self in the Discharge of their Duty, in  
 the reprovng of Sin, and venturing on the Indignation  
 of great Men; he confesses he had not yet been able to  
 free his Mind from that Disease, and till he had subdued  
 it, he judged himself bound to fly from all the steps to  
 Preferment; for the nearer he should come to it, he reckoned  
 the appetite to it, would rage the higher within him; where-  
 as, the way to break it quite, was to keep himself at the great-  
 est distance from it: nor had he that vivacity, or lively acti-  
 vity of temper, which became this Function; nor that softness  
 and gentleness of mind, that was necessary to prepare him to  
 bear injuries, to endure contempt, or to treat People with the  
 mildness that Christ has enjoined his followers, which he  
 thought more necessary to a Bishop than all Fastings, or bodily  
 Mortifications whatsoever: And he runs out into along Di-  
 gression upon the great Mischiefs that a fretful and spiteful tem-  
 per did to him that was under the power of it, and to the Church  
 when a Bishop was soured with it. It will often break out, it  
 will be much observed, and will give great scandal: For as a  
 little Smoke, will darken and hide the clearest Object: so if all  
 the rest of a Bishop's Life were brighter than the Beams of  
 the Sun, a little Blemish, a Passion, or Indiscretion, will dark-  
 en all, and make all the rest be forgotten: Allowances are  
 not made to them, as to other Men; the World expects great  
 things from them, as if they had not Flesh and Blood in them,  
 not a Humane but an Angelical nature; therefore, a Bishop  
 ought by a constant watchfulness, and a perpetual strictness,

' to be armed with Armour of Proof of all sides, that no wound  
 ' may hurt him. Stories will be easily believed to his disadvantage, and his Clergy about him will be ready to find them out,  
 ' and to spread them abroad. He laies this down for a certain  
 ' Maxim, That every man knows himself best: and therefore  
 ' whatsoever others might think of him, he who knew well that  
 ' he had not in himself those qualifications, that were necessary  
 ' for this Function, ought not to suffer himself to be determined  
 ' by that. After this he lays open the great Disorders, Factions,  
 ' Partialities, and Calumnies, with which the Popular Elections  
 ' were at that time managed: and the general Corruption that  
 ' had over-run the whole Church; so that the Strictness and  
 ' Authority, the Gentleness and Prudence, the Courage and Patience,  
 ' that were necessary to a Bishop were very hard to be  
 ' found all together. He instances to make out the difficulty of  
 ' discharging the duty of a Bishop, in that single point, of managing  
 ' the Widows: who were so meddling, so immoral, so factious  
 ' and so clamorous, that this alone was enough to imploy  
 ' a Bishop's prudence, and to exercise his patience: from that  
 ' and another Article relating to it concerning the Virgins, he  
 ' goes to consider the Trouble, the Difficulties, and Censures  
 ' that Bishops were subject to, by the hearing of Causes, that  
 ' were referred to them: Many pretending they were wronged  
 ' by their Judgments, made shipwreck of the Faith, in revenge:  
 ' and they pressed so hard upon the Bishops time, that it was not  
 ' possible for him to content them, and discharge the other  
 ' parts of his Duty. Then he reckons up the many Visits that  
 ' were expected from Bishops: the several Civilities they were  
 ' obliged to, which it was hard to manage so, as not to be either  
 ' too much or too little in them: Matter of censure would be  
 ' found in both extremes. Then he reflects on the great temper  
 ' that ought to be observed in the final sentence of Excommunication;  
 ' between a gentleness to Vice on the one hand, and the driving  
 ' men to Despair and Apostasie on the other. And he concludes that  
 ' Book with Reflections on the vast burthen that follows the care of Souls.  
 ' In his 4th. Book he runs through a variety of Arts and Professions;  
 ' and shews how much skill and labour was necessary for every one of them: from whence

' he

' he concludes strongly, that much more was necessary for that  
 ' which was the most important of all others ; so that no confi-  
 ' deration whatsoever, should make a man undertake it, if he  
 ' did not find himself in some sort qualified for it : more parti-  
 ' cularly he ought to be ready to give an account of his Faith,  
 ' and to stop the mouths of all gain-sayers, *Jews, Gentiles, and He-*  
 ' *reticks* : in which the Ignorance of many Bishops, carrying  
 ' things from one extream to another, had given great occasi-  
 ' on to Errours. A Bishop must understand the stile and phrase  
 ' of the Scriptures well. From this he runs out into a very No-  
 ' ble Panegyrick upon St. *Paul*, in whom a pattern was set to all  
 ' Bishops. His 5th Book sets out the labour of preaching the  
 ' tentations to Vanity in it ; the censures that were apt to be  
 ' made if there was either too much or too little Art or Elo-  
 ' quence in Sermons : to this he adds, the great exactness that a  
 ' Bishop should use in preserving his Reputation ; yet without  
 ' Vanity : observing a due temper between despising the cen-  
 ' sures of the Multitude, and the servile courting of applauses : In  
 ' his Sermons he ought above all things to study to edifie ;  
 ' but not to Flatter his Hearers : or to use vain arts to raise  
 ' esteem, or admiration from them. Since a Bishop whose mind  
 ' was not purged from this disease, must go through many toss-  
 ' ings and be much disquieted : and upon that he runs out so  
 ' fully, upon the tentations to desire applause for Eloquence, and  
 ' a readiness in speaking, that it plainly appears that he felt that  
 ' to be his own weak side. The 6th Book is chiefly employed to  
 ' shew how much a harder thing it was to govern the Church,  
 ' than to live in a *Desart*, under the severest mortifications.

I will go no further in this abstract, I hope I have drawn out  
 enough to give a Curiosity to such as have not yet read those  
 Excellent Books, to do it over and over again. For to any that has  
 a true relish, they can never be too often read : every reading  
 will afford a fresh pleasure, and new matter of Instruction, and  
 Meditation. But I go in the last place to offer St. *Jerom's* sense  
 in this matter. I shall not bring together, what lies scattered  
 through his works, upon this Argument, nor shall I quote what  
 he writ in his Youth upon it, when the natural flame of his  
 temper joyned with the heat of Youth might make him carry his  
 thoughts

thoughts further, than what humane nature could bear : But I shall only give an abstract of that which he writ to *Nepotian* on this Head, in his old Age, as he says himself : a good part of that Epistle being a reflection upon the different sense that old Age gives of these things, from that which he felt during the ardour of Youth.

He begins with the title *Clerk*, which signifying a Lot or Portion. 'Imports either that the Clergy are *God's Portion*, or that ' *God is theirs*, and that therefore they ought to *possess God*, ' *and be possessed of him*. He that has this portion, must be satisfied with it, and pretend to nothing, but having Food and ' Rayment, be therewith content : and (as men carried their ' Crosses naked, so ) to be ready to carry his. He must not seek ' the advantages of this world in Christ's warfare ; some Clerks ' grew richer under Christ, who made himself poor, than ever ' they could have been, if they had continued in the service of ' the God of this World : So that the Church groaned under the ' wealth of those, who were Beggars before they forsook the ' World : Let the Strangers and the Poor be fed at your Tables, ' says he, and in these you entertain Christ himself. When you ' see a trafficking Clerk, who from being Poor grows Rich, and ' from being mean becomes great, fly from him as from a Plague. ' The conversations of such men corrupted good minds : They ' sought after wealth, and loved Company, the publick Places ' of conversation, Fairs and Market-places : whereas a true Clerk ' loves silence, and retirement : then he gives him a strong caution against conversing with Women : and in particular against ' all those mean compliances, which some Clerks used towards ' rich Women ; by which they got not only Presents during their ' lives, but Legacies by their Wills. That abuse had grown ' to such an intolerable excess, that a Law was made excluding ' Priests from having any benefit by *Testaments* : They were ' the only persons that were put under that incapacity : Hea- ' then Priests were not included in the *Law*, yet he does not ' complain of the *Law*, but of those who had given just occasion ' for making it. The Laws of Christ had been contemned, so it ' was necessary to restrain them by humane Laws. It was ' the Glory of a *Bishop* to provide for the poor, but it was the ' Re-



Reproach of a Priest to study the *enriching of himself*. He reckons up many Instances of the base and abject Flattery of some Clerks, to gain upon rich and dying persons, and to get their Estates. Next he exhorts him to the constant and diligent study of the Scriptures; but to be sure to do nothing that should contradict his discourses or give occasion to his Hearers to answer him thus, *Why do not you do as you say?* Then he speaks of the Union that ought to be between the Bishop, and his Clergy: the affection on the one side, and the obedience on the other. In Preaching he must not study to draw *applauses* but *Groans* from his Hearers. Their Tears was the best sort of commendation of a Sermon, in which great care was to be taken to avoid the methods of the Stage, or of common Declamations. Great use was to be made of the Scriptures. The mysteries of our Faith and the Sacraments of our Religion ought to be well explained: Grimaces and solemn Looks are often made use of to give Weight and Authority to that which has none in it self. He charges him to use a plain simplicity in his Habit, neither shewing too much nicety on the one Hand, that savours of Luxury, nor such a neglect on the other, as might savour of Affectation. He recommends particularly the Care of the Poor to him. Then he speaks of Clergy-Mens mutually preferring one another; considering that there are different Members in one Body, and that every one has his own Function, and peculiar Talent: And that therefore no man ought to over-value his own, or under-value his Neighbours. A plain Clerk ought not to value himself upon his Simplicity and Ignorance, nor ought a learned and eloquent Man measure his Holiness by his Rhetorick; for indeed of the two, a Holy Simplicity is much more valuable, than Unsanctified Eloquence. He speaks against the Affectation of Magnificence and Riches, in the Worship of God, as things more becoming the Pomp of the Jewish Religion, than the Humility of the Spiritual Doctrine of Christ. He falls next upon the high and sumptuous way



of living of some Priests, which they pretended was necessary to procure them the respect that was due to them; and to give them interest and credit: but the World, at least the better part of it, would always value a Priest more for his Holiness, than for his Wealth. He charges him strictly to avoid all the excesses of Wine, and in Opposition to that to fast much, but without Superstition, or a nicety in the choice of such things as he was to live on in the time of fasting. Some shewed a trifling Superstition in those Matters, as well as Vanity and Affectation; that was indeed Scandalous. Plain and simple Fasting was despised as not singular nor pompous enough for their Pride. For it seems by what follows, that the Clergy was then corrupted with the same disorders, with which our Saviour had reproached the *Pharisees*, while they did not study inward Purity, so much as outward Appearances; nor the pleasing of God, so much as the praise of Men. But here he stops short, for it seems he went too near the describing some eminent Man in that Age; from that he turns to the Government of a Priest's Tongue: He ought neither to detract from any one himself, nor to encourage such as did: The very hearkning to slander, was very unbecoming. They ought to visit their People, but not to report in one place, what they observed in another; in that they ought to be both discreet and secret. *Hippocrates* adjured those that came to study from him, to be secret, grave, and prudent in their whole behaviour; but how much more did this become those, to whom the Care of Souls was trusted. He advises him to visit his People rather in their Afflictions, than in their Prosperity; not to go too often to their Feasts, which must needs lessen him that does it too much. He, in the last place, speaks very severely of those who applied the Wealth of the Church to their own private Uses. It was Theft to defraud a Friend, but it was *Sacrilege* to rob the Church. It was a Crime that exceeded the Cruelty of High-way Men, to receive that which belonged indeed to the Poor, and to withdraw any part of it to ones

ones private Occasions. He concludes with this excuse, That he had named no Person, he had not writ to reproach others; but to give them warning. And therefore since he had treated of the Vices of the Clergy in general Terms, if any was offended with him for it, he thereby plainly confessed that he himself was guilty.

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## C H A P. V.

*An Account of some Canons in divers Ages of the Church relating to the Duties and Labours of the Clergy.*

I Will go no further, in gathering Quotations to shew the sense that the Fathers had in these matters: these are both so full and so express, that I can find none more plain and more forcible. I shall to these add some of the *Canons* that have been made both in the best and in the worst Ages of the Church, obliging Bishops and other Clerks to *Residence* and to be contented with *one Cure*. In that at *Sardica* that met in the Year 347. consisting of above 350. Bishops two Canons were made, (the 11th and the 12th) against *Bishops who without any urgent necessity, or pressing business, should be absent from their Church above three weeks, and thereby grieve the Flock, that was committed to their care:* And even this provision was made because Bishops had Estates lying out of their Diocesses; therefore they were allowed to go and look after them, for three weeks, in which time they were to perform the divine function in the Churches to which those Estates belonged.

Many provisions were also made against such as went to Court, unless they were called by the Emperors, or went by a Deputation from the Church upon a publick account. There is not any one thing more frequently provided against, than that any of the Clergy should leave their Church, and go to any other Church, or live any where else, without the Bishops leave and consent: nor is there any thing clearer from all the Canons of the first Ages, than that they considered the Clergy of every Church as a body of men dedicated to its service, that lived upon the Oblations of the Faithful, and that was to labour in the several parts of the Ecclesiastical Ministry, as they should be ordered by the Bishop.

In the 4th General Council at *Calcedon* *Pluralities*, do first appear: for they are mentioned and condemned in the 10th Canon, which runs thus, *No Clerk shall at the same time belong to two Churches; to wit, to that in which he was first ordained, and that to which as being the greater, he has gone, out of a desire of vain glory; for such as do so, ought to be sent back to that Church in which they were at first ordained, and to serve there only; but if any has been translated from one Church to another, he shall receive nothing out of his former Church; nor out of any Chapel or Alms-house belonging to it: and such as shall transgress this definition of this General Council are condemned by it, to be degraded.* I go next to a worse Scene of the Church to see what provisions were made in this matter about the 8th Century, both in the East and in the West: The worse that those Ages and Councils were, it makes the Argument the stronger, since even bad men in bad times, could not justify or suffer such an abuse.

In the year 727. the Second Council of *Nice* was held, that settled the worship of Images. The 15 Canon of it runs thus. 'No Clerk shall from henceforth be reckoned in two Churches, (for every Church had a Catalogue of its Clergy, by which the dividends were made) 'for this is the Character of Trafficking, and Covetousness, and wholly estranged

estranged from the Ecclesiastical Custom. We have heard from our Saviour's own words, that *no man can serve two Masters: for he will either hate the one or love the other, or cleave to the one and despise the other: Let every one therefore according to the Apostles words, continue in the Vocation in which he is called, and serve in one Church: For those things which filthy Lucre has brought into Church matters are contrary to God. There is a Variety of employments, for acquiring the necessary supplies of this life: Let every one that pleases, make use of these, for furnishing himself: For the Apostle saies these hands Ministered to my necessities, and to those that were with me. This shall be the rule in this Town, which is guarded by God, but in remote Villages an Indulgence may be granted by reason of the want of men. It is upon this that the Canonists do found the first of the two reasons, for which only they allow that a Dispensation for holding two Benefices may be lawful, one is, the want of fit and sufficient men for the service of the Church. The foundation of the other will be found in the Canon, which I shall next set down.*

It is the 49 Canon of the sixth Council at *Paris*, under *Lewis the Good*, in the Year 829. this Council came after a great many, that had been held by *Charles the Great*, and his Son for purging out abuses, and for restraining the Primitive Discipline. These Councils sat at *Frankfort, Ments, Aken, Rheims, Chalons, Tours, Arles*, and this of *Paris* was the last that was held upon that design. In these, all the Primitive Canons relating to the Lives and Labours, and the government of the Clergy, were renewed. Among others is that of *Calcedon* formerly mentioned: but it seems there was no occasion given to make a special one against Pluralities, before this held at *Paris*, which consisted of four Provinces of *France, Rheims, Sens, Tours, and Rouen*. The Canon runs thus: *As it becomes every City to have its proper Bishop; so it is also becoming and necessary that every Church dedicated to God, should have its proper Priest. Yet Covetousness which is Idolatry (of which we are much*

much ashamed) has so got hold of some Priests and caught them captives in its Fetters, that they, blinded with it, know neither whether they go nor what they ought to be or do; so that they being kindled with the fire of Covetousness, and forgetful of the Priestly Dignity, neglecting the care of those Churches, to which they were promoted, do by some presents given or promised, procure other Churches not only from Clerks, but from Lay men, in which they do against Law undertake to perform the Ministry of Christ. It is not known whether their Bishops are consulted in this matter, or not; if they are, without doubt their Bishops become partakers of their sin: but if they presume to do it without consulting them, yet it is to be imputed to the Bishops negligence. There is scarce a Priest to be found who warreth worthily, and diligently in that Church in which he is dedicated, to the Divine Service: but how much less will he be able to do that worthily in two, three or more Churches? This practice brings a reproach on the Christian Religion, and a confusion on the Priestly Order. The Covetousness of the Clergy is censured by their people; the worship of God is not performed in places consecrated to him; and as was observed in the former Chapters, the Souls of the people are thereby much endangered. Wherefore we do all unanimously appoint, that no Bishop suffer this to be done in his Parish (or Diocese, these words being used promiscuously) any more, and we Decree, that every Church that has a Congregation belonging to it, and has means by which it may subsist, shall have its proper Priest: for if it has a Congregation but has not Means by which it may subsist, that matter is left to the Bishop, to consider whether it can or ought to be supported or not. But it is specially recommended to their care to see that under this pretence, no Priest may out of Covetousness hold two or three Churches, in which he cannot serve, nor perform the worship of God. The last provisions in this Canon are the grounds upon which the Canonists found the second just cause of dispensing with Pluralities, which is when a Church is so poor, that the Profits which arise out of it cannot afford a competent maintenance to a

Clark:



Clark: but then the question arises what is a *Competent Maintenance*: this, they do all bring very low, to that which can just maintain him: and they have so clogged it, that no pretence should be given by so general a word, to *Covetousness*, *Voluptuousness*, or *Ambition*. And indeed while we have so many poor Churches among us, instead of restraining such Pluralities, it were rather to be wished that it were made easier than by Law it is at present; either to unite them together, or to make one man capable of serving two Churches, when both Benefices make but a tolerable subsistence, rather than to be forced to have a greater number of Clerks, than can be decently maintained; since it is certain, that it is more for the Interest of Religion and for the good of Souls, to have one worthy man serving two Churches, and dividing himself between them; than to have Clerks for many Benefices, whose scandalous provisions, make too many scandalous incumbents, which is one of the greatest Diseases and Miseries of this Church.

But a due care in this matter has no relation to the accumulation of Livings, at great distances, (every one of which can well support an Incumbent) upon the same Person merely for the making of a Family, for the supporting of Luxury or Vanity, or for other base and Covetous designs. But I go next to two of the worst Councils that ever carried the name of *General ones*, the third and the fourth of the *Lateran* that we may see what was the sense of the Twelfth and Thirteenth Century in this matter; notwithstanding the Corruption of those Ages. The Thirteenth Canon of the Third *Lateran Council*, runs thus. 'Forasmuch, as some whose Covetousness has no bounds, endeavour to procure to themselves divers Ecclesiastical Dignities, and several Parish Churches, against the Provisions of the Holy Canons; by which means, tho they are scarce able to perform the Office of one, they do claim the Provisions due to many: We do severely require, that this may not be done for the future: And therefore, when any Church or Ecclesiastical Ministry is to be given, let such a  
one

' one be sought out for it ; as shall reside upon the place,  
 ' and shall be able to discharge the Care in his own Person :  
 If otherwise, he who receives any such benefice, contrary  
 ' to the Canons, shall lose it, and he who gave it shall like-  
 ' wise lose his right of Patronage. This Canon not being found  
 effectual to cure so great an abuse. The Twenty Ninth Ca-  
 non of the Fourth Council in the *Lateran*, was penned in  
 these Words. ' It was with great Care forbidden in the  
 ' Council of the *Lateran*, that any one should have divers Ec-  
 ' clestical Dignities, and more Parish Churches than one,  
 ' which is contrary to the Holy Canons. Otherwise, he  
 ' that took them should lose them, and he that gave them  
 ' should lose the right of giving them: But by reason of some  
 ' Mens Presumption and Covetousness, that Decree has had  
 ' little or no effect hitherto; we therefore desiring to make  
 ' a more evident and express Provision against these abuses, do  
 ' appoint that whosoever shall receive any Benefice, to which  
 ' a Care of Souls is annexed, shall thereupon by Law be de-  
 ' prived of any other such Benefice, that he formerly had ; and  
 ' if he endeavours still to hold it, he shall lose the other like-  
 ' wise; and he to whom the right of the Patronage of his  
 ' first Benefice did belong, is empowered to bestow it upon his  
 ' accepting another ; and if he delays the bestowing it, above  
 ' Three months, not only shall his right devolve to another,  
 ' according to the Decree of the Council in the *Lateran*, but  
 ' he shall be obliged to restore to the Church, to which the  
 ' Benefice belongs, all that which he himself received during  
 ' the vacancy. This we do likewise Decree as to Personages;  
 ' and do further appoint that no Man shall presume to  
 ' hold more Dignities or Parsonages than one in the same  
 ' Church, even though they have no Cure of Souls annexed to  
 ' them. Provided always that Dispensations may be grant-  
 ' ed by the *Apostolical See*, to Persons of high Birth, or emi-  
 ' nently learned (*sublimes & literatas personas*) or digni-  
 ' fied in Universities, for so the word *literati* was understood,  
 ' who upon occasion may be honoured, with greater Bene-  
 ' fices. It was by this last Proviso, that this as well as all other  
 ' Canons, made against these Abuses became quite ineffe-  
 ctual ;

ctual; for this had no other effect, but the obliging People to go to *Rome* for *Dispensations*; so that *this* Canon instead of reforming the Abuse, did really establish it, for the Qualifications here mentioned were so far stretched, that any Person that had obtained a Degree in any University, came within the Character of *lettered* or *learned*, and all those that were in any dependance upon *great Men*, came likewise within the other Qualification of *high Rank and Birth*.

This was the Practice among us, during the Reign of *Henry the 8th.* and he when he was beginning to threaten the *See of Rome*, in the matter of his *Divorce*, got that Act to be passed, which has been the occasion of so much Scandal and Disorder in this Church. It seems to one that considers it well, that the Clauses which qualifie *Pluralities* were grafted upon another Bill against *Spiritual Persons taking Estates to Farm*, with which that Act begins: And that in the carrying that on, such a temper shewed it self, that the other was added to it. It contained indeed a Limitation of the *Papal Authority*, but so many Provisions were made, that the *Nobility, Clergy*, and the more eminent of the *Gentry, Knights* in particular, were so taken Care of, that it could meet with no great Opposition in the Parliament; but from the state of that Time, and from several Clauses in the Act it self, it appears, it was only intended to be a Provisional Act; tho it is conceived in the Style of a perpetual Law. By it then, and by it only (for I have not been able to find that any such Act ever passed in any Kingdom or State in *Christianity*, many having been made plainly to the contrary in *France*, declaring the Obligation to *Residence* to be of *Divine Right*) were the Abuses, that had arisen out of the Canon of one of the worst Councils that ever was, authorised and settled among us; as far as a Law of the Land can settle them. But after all, it is to be considered that a Law does indeed change the Legal and Political Nature of things, it gives a Title to a Free-hold and Property: But no Humane Law can change the Moral or Divine Laws, and cancel their Authority. If a *false Religion* is settled by Law, it becomes indeed the *legal Religion*; but is not a whit the

1700 for that. And therefore, if the Laws of the Gospel oblige Clerks to Personal Labour, as was formerly made out; *An Act of Parliament* may indeed qualifie a Man, in Law, to enjoy the *Benefice*, whether he labours in it or not, but it can never dissolve his Obligation to *Residence* and *Personal Labour*.

But to bring this Chapter to an end, I shall only add Three Decrees that were made by the Council of *Trent*, in this matter, that so it may appear what Provisions they made against Abuses, which are still supported by Laws among us: A part of the 1<sup>st</sup> Chap. of Reformation that past in the Sixth Session, runs thus: 'This Synod admonishes all that are set over any Cathedral Churches, by what Title soever, that they taking heed to themselves, and to all the Flock, over which the Holy Ghost has set them, to Govern the Church of God, which he has purchased with his own Blood, do watch and labour and fulfill their Ministry, as the Apostle has commanded: And they must know that they cannot do this, if as Hirelings they forsake the Flock committed to them, and do not watch over those Sheep, whose Blood will be required at their Hands, in the last Day. Since it is certain that no excuse will be received, if the Wolfe devours the Sheep, when the Shepherd does not look after them. Yet since to our great Grief it is found, that some at this time neglect the Salvation of their own Souls, and preferring Earthy things to Heavenly, are still about Courts, and forsaking the Fold, and the Care of the Sheep trusted to them, do give themselves wholly to Earthly and Temporal Cares; therefore all the Ancient Canons, which by the Iniquity of Times, and the Corruptions of Men were fallen into desuetude, are renewed against *Non residents*. To which, several compulsory Clauses are added, which are indeed slight ones, because the Execution of them was intirely put in the Pope's Power, and the Punishment did only lie, if a Bishop was absent Six Months in a Year.

This Decree did not satisfy those who moved for a Reformation; so a fuller one was made in the 2<sup>3</sup>d Session, 1<sup>st</sup> Chap.

in these Words: 'Whereas, by the Law of God, all those  
'to whom the Care of Souls is committed, are commanded  
'to know their Sheep, to offer Sacrifice for them, to feed  
'them by the Preaching of the Word of God, the Admini-  
'stration of the Sacraments, and by the Example of a good  
'Life, to have a tender Care of the poor, and all other  
'miserable Persons, and to lay themselves out upon all the  
'other Functions of the Pastoral Care; which cannot be per-  
'formed by those, who do not watch over, nor are present  
'with their Flock: Therefore this Synod does admonish  
'and exhort them, that they remembering the Divine Pre-  
'cepts, and being made an Example to their Flock, may  
'feed and govern them in Righteousness and Truth. Upon  
'this they declare that all Bishops, even Cardinals them-  
'selves, are obliged to Personal Residence, in their Church  
'and Diocess, and there to discharge their Duty: Unless  
'upon some special Provisions. By which indeed a Door is  
opened to as many Corruptions as the Court of *Rome*  
thinks fit to dispense with. Yet without this, none may  
be absent above two, or at most, three Months, in the whole  
Year; and even that must be upon a just reason, and  
without any prejudice to the Flock; and they leave this  
'upon the Consciences of such as withdraw for so long a  
'time, which they hope will be Religious and Tender in  
'this matter, since all Hearts are known to God, and it is  
'no small Sin to do his Work negligently. They declare the  
breaking this Decree to be a *Mortal Sin*, and that such as are  
guilty of it, cannot with a good Conscience enjoy the  
mean Profits, during such their Absence; but are bound to  
lay them out on the Fabrick, or give them to the Poor:  
and all these Provisions and Punishments, they do also make  
against the inferior Clergy, that enjoyed any Benefice, to  
which the Cure of Souls was annexed, and the execution of  
that, is put in the Bishop's Hands, who is required not to dis-  
pense with their *Residence*, unless upon a very weighty  
occasion, above two Months; and in this they give the  
Bishop so full an Authority, that no Appeal or Prohi-  
bition was to lie against his Sentence, upon *non-Residents*,  
even in the Court of *Rome*. In these Decrees, tho the



Papal Party hindered a formal Declaration of the Obligation to Residence, by *Divine Right*, that so room might still be left for the *Dispensing Power*; yet they went very near it, they applied Passages of Scripture to it, and laid the charge of *mortal Sin* upon it.

In the last place, I shall set down the Decree that was made in the 24<sup>th</sup> Session, *Chap. 17.* against Pluralities, in these Words: Whereas the Ecclesiastical Order is perverted, when one Clerk has the Offices of many committed to him, it was therefore well provided by the Holy Canons, that no Man should be put in two Churches. But many led by their depraved Covetousness, deceiving themselves, but not God, are not ashamed to elude those good Constitutions, by several Artifices, and obtain more Benefices than one at the same time: Therefore the Synod being desirous to restore a proper Discipline for the Government of Churches, does, by this Decree, by which all Persons, of what Rank soever, even Cardinals themselves, shall be bound; appoint, that for the future, one Man shall be capable of receiving only one Ecclesiastical Benefice. But if that is not sufficient for the decent maintenance of him that has it, then it shall be lawful to give him another *simple Benefice*, provided that both Benefices do not require *Personal Residence*. This Rule must be applied not only to Cathedrals, but to all other Benefices whether Secular, Regular, or such as are held by *Commendam*, or of what sort or order soever they may be. And as for such as do at present possess either more Parish Churches than one, or one Cathedral, and another Parish-Church, they shall be forced notwithstanding of any Dispensations or Unions that may have been granted them, for term of Life, to resign within the space of Six Months, all that they do now hold, except one Cathedral, or one Parochial Church; otherwise, all their Benefices, whether Parochial, or others, shall be by Law esteemed void; and as such they shall be disposed of to others. Nor may those who formerly enjoyed them, receive the mean Profits, after the term of Six Months, with a good Conscience. But the Synod wishes that

' that some due Provision might be made, such as the Pope  
' shall think fit, for the necessities of those who are hereby  
' obliged to Resign.

These were the decrees that were made by that *pretended*  
*general Council* : And wheresoever that Council is received,  
they are so seldom dispensed with, that the Scandal of *Non-*  
*Residence*, or *Plurality*, does no more cry in that Church.  
In *France*, tho that *Council* is not there received, yet such  
regard is had to Primitive Rules, that it is not heard of  
among them. Such Examples are to us Reproaches indeed :  
And that of the worst sort, when the Argument from the  
neglect of the Pastoral Care, which gave so great an Advan-  
tage at first to the Reformers, and turned the Hearts of  
the World so much from their Careless Pastors to those who  
shewed more Zeal and Concern for them, is now against  
us, and lies the other way. If the Nature of Man is so  
made, that it is not possible, but that *Offences must come*, yet,  
*woe be to him, by whom they come.*

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## CHAP. VI.

*Of the declared Sense and Rules of the Church of  
England in this matter.*

**W**Hatsoever may be the practice of any among us,  
and whatsoever may be the force of some Laws  
that were made in bad times, and perhaps upon bad ends,  
yet we are sure the Sense of our Church is very different ;  
She intended to raise the obligation of the Pastoral Care  
higher than it was before : and has laid out this matter  
more fully and more strictly, than any Church ever did,  
in any Age ; as far at least as my Enquiries can carry  
me. The truest Indication of the Sense of a Church is to  
be taken from her Language, in her *Publick Offices* :  
This is that which she speaks the most frequently, and  
the

themost publickly: even the *Articles of Doctrine* are not so much read and so often heard, as her *Liturgies* are: and as this way of Reasoning has been of late made use of with great advantage, against the *Church of Rome*, to make her accountable, for all her *Publick Offices* in their plain and literal meaning; so I will make use of it on this occasion: It is the stronger in our case; whose Offices being in a Tongue understood by the people, the Argument from them does more evidently conclude here.

In general then this is to be observed, that no Church before ours, at the *Reformation*, took a formal *Sponsion* at the *Altar*, from such as were ordained *Deacons* and *Priests*. That was indeed always demanded of Bishops, but neither in the *Roman* nor *Greek Pontifical*, do we find any such solemn Vows and Promises demanded or made by Priests or Deacons, nor does any print of this appear in the *Constitutions*, the pretended *Arcopagite*, or the antient *Canons of the Church*. Bishops were asked many questions, as appears by the first Canon of the fourth Council of *Carthage*. They were required to profess their Faith, and to promise to obey the *Canons*, which is still observed in the *Greek Church*. The questions are more express in the *Roman Pontifical*, and the first of these demands a promise that they will instruct their people in the Christian Doctrine, according to the *Holy Scriptures*: which was the Foundation upon which our Bishops justified the Reformation; Since the first and chief of all their Vowes binding them to this, it was to take place of all others; and if any other parts of those Sponsions, contradicted this, such as their Obedience and Adherence to the See of *Rome*, they said that these were to be limited by this.

All the account I can give of this general practice of the Church in demanding Promises only of *Bishops*, and not of the other *Orders* is this, that they considered the Government of the *Priests* and *Deacons*, as a thing that was so entirely in the *Bishop*, as it was indeed by the first Constitution, that it was not thought necessary to bind them to their Duty by any Publick Vowes or Promises (though it is very probable

probable that the *Bishops* might take private engagements of them, before they ordained them) it being in the *Bishop's* power to Restrain and Censure them in a very Absolute and Summary way. But the case was quite different in *Bishops*, who were all equal by their *Rank* and *Order*: None having any Authority over them, by any Divine Law or the Rules of the Gospel: the power of Primates, and Metropolitans having arisen out of Ecclesiastical and Civil Laws, and not being equally great in all Countries and Provinces: and therefore it was more necessary to proceed with greater caution, and to demand a further security from them.

But the new face of the Constitution of the Church, by which *Priests* were not under so absolute a subjection to their *Bishops*, as they had been at first, which was occasioned partly, by the Tyranny of some *Bishops*, to which bounds were set by Laws and *Canons*, partly by their having a special Property and *Benefice* of their own, and so not being maintained by a Dividend out of the common-stock of the Church as at first; had so altered the state of things, that indeed no part of the Episcopacy was left entirely in the *Bishop's* hands, but the power of Ordination. This is still free and unrestrained: no *Writs*, nor *Prohibitions* from *Civil Courts*; and no *Appeals* have clogged or fettered this, as they have done all the other parts of their Authority. Therefore our Reformers observing all this, took great care in Reforming the Office of Ordination, and they made both the Charge that is given, and the Promises that are to be taken, to be very express and solemn, that so both the *Ordainers* and the *Ordained* might be rightly instructed in their Duty and struck with the awe and dread, that they ought to be under in so holy and so important a performance: and though all mankind does easily enough agree in this, That Promises ought to be Religiously observed, which men make to one another, how apt soever they may be to break them: yet to make the sense of these Promises go deeper, they are ordered to be made at the Altar, and in the nature of a *Stipulation* or *Covenant*, the Church

Church conferring *Orders*, or indeed rather, Christ by the Ministry of the Officers that he has constituted, conferring them upon those *Promises* that are first made. The Forms of Ordination in the *Greek Church*, which we have reason to believe are less changed, and more conform to the Primitive patterns, than those used by the *Latins*, do plainly import that the Church only declared the Divine Vocation. *The Grace of God, that perfects the feeble, and heals the weak, promotes this man to be a Deacon, a Priest or a Bishop:* Where nothing is expressed as conferred but only as declared, so our Church by making our *Saviour's words*, the form of Ordination, must be construed to intend, by that that it is Christ only that sends, and that the *Bishops* are only his Ministers to pronounce his Mission; otherwise it is not so easie to justify the use of this Form, *Receive the Holy Ghost:* which as it was not used in the Primitive Church nor by the Roman, till within these five Hundred Years, so in that Church, it is not the Form of Ordination but a Benediction given by the *Bishop* singly, after the Orders are given by the *Bishop* and the other *Priests* joyning with him. For this is done by him alone as the final consummation of the Action. But our using this as the form of Ordination shews, that we consider our selves only as the Instruments that speak in Christ's Name and Words: Insinuating thereby that he only Ordains. Pursuant to this in the Ordaining of *Priests*, the questions are put *in the name of God and of his Church*. Which makes the answers to them to be of the nature of *Vows* and *Oaths*. So that if men do make conscience of any thing, and if it is possible to strike terrour into them, the Forms of our *Ordinations* are the most effectually contrived for that end that could have been framed.

The first question that is put in the *Office of Deacons*, is, *Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this Office, to serve God for the promoting of his Glory, and the edifying of his people?* To which he is to answer *I trust so*. This is put only in this *Office*, and not repeated after wards: it being justly supposed that where one has had this motion, all the other



other Orders may be in time conferred pursuant to it ; but this is the first step, by which a Man dedicates himself to the Service of God ; and therefore it ought not to be made by any, that has not this Divine Vocation. Certainly, the *Answer* that is made to this, ought to be well considered ; for if any says, *I trust so*, that yet knows nothing of any such *motion*, and can give no account of it, he *lies* to the *Holy Ghost* ; and makes his first approach to the Altar, with a *lie* in his Mouth ; and that not to *Men*, but to *God* ; and how can one expect to be received by *God*, or be *sent* and *sealed* by him, that dares do a thing of so crying a Nature, as to pretend that he trusts he has this *motion*, who knows that he has it not, who has made no Reflections on it, and when asked, what he means by it, can say nothing concerning it, and yet he dares venture to come and say it to *God* and his *Church* : If a Man pretends a *Commission* from a *Prince*, or indeed from any Person, and acts in his *Name* upon it, the Law will fall on him, and punish him, and shall the *Great God of Heaven and Earth*, be thus vouched, and his *motion* he pretended to, by those whom he has neither *called* nor *sent* ? and shall not he reckon with those who dare to run without his *Mission*, pretending that they *trust* they have it, when perhaps they understand not the Importance of it, nay, and perhaps some laugh at it, as an Enthusiastical Question, who, yet will go through with the *Office* ? They come to Christ for the *Loaves* : They hope to live by the *Altar*, and the *Gospel*, how little soever they *serve* at the one, or *Preach* the other ; therefore they will say any thing, that is necessary for qualifying them to this whether true or false. It cannot be denied, but that this Question carries a sound in it, that seems a little too high, and that may rather raise Scruples, as importing somewhat that is not ordinary, and that seems to favour of *Enthusiasm* ; and therefore it was put here, without doubt, to give great caution to such as come to the Service of the Church ; many  
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## Of the Pastoral Care.

may be able to answer it truly according to the Sense of the Church, who may yet have great doubting in themselves concerning it; but every Man that has it not, must needs know that he has it not.

The true meaning of it must be resolved thus; the Motives that ought to determine a Man, to dedicate himself to the Ministry in the Church, are a Zeal for promoting the Glory of God, for raising the Honour of the Christian Religion, for the making it to be better understood, and more submitted to. He that loves it, and feels the excellency of it in himself, that has a due Sense of God's goodness in it to Mankind, and that is entirely possessed with that, will feel a Zeal within himself, for communicating that to others; that *to the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent*, may be more universally glorified, and served by his Creatures: And when to this he has added a concern of the Souls for Men, a Tenderness for them, a Zeal to rescue them from endless Misery, and a desire to put them in the way to everlasting Happiness, and from these Motives feels in himself a desire to dedicate his Life and Labours to those ends; and in order to them studies to understand the Scriptures, and more particularly, the *New Testament*, that from thence he may form a true Notion of this Holy Religion, and so be an *able Minister of it*; this Man, and only this Man, so *moved* and so qualified, can in Truth, and with a good Conscience answer, that he *trusts he is inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost*. And every one that ventures on the saying it, without this, is a *Sacrilegious profaner* of the Name of God, and of his *Holy Spirit*. He breaks in upon his Church, not to *feed* it but to *rob* it: And it is certain that he who begins with a Lie, may be sent by the *Father of Lies*, but he cannot be thought to enter in, by the Door, who prevaricates in the first word that he says in order to his Admittance.

But if the Office of *Deacons* offers no other particular matter of Reflection, the Office of *Ordaining Priests*, has a great deal; indeed the whole of it, is calculated to the best Notions  
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of the best Times. In the Charge that is given, the Figures of *Watchmen, Shepherds, and Stewards*, are pursued, and the places of Scripture relating to these are applied to them: *They are required to have always printed in their Remembrance: How great a Treasure was committed to their Charge: The Church and Congregation whom you must serve is his Spouse and Body. Then the greatness of the fault of their Negligence, and the horrible Punishment that will follow upon it, is set before them, in case the Church or any Member of it take any hurt or hinderance by reason of it: They are charged never to cease their Labour, Care and Diligence, till they have done all that lieth in them, according to their bounden Duty, towards all such, as are, or shall be committed to their Care, to bring them to a Ripeness and Perfection: of Age in Christ. They are again urged to consider with what care and study, they ought to apply themselves to this; to pray earnestly for Gods Holy Spirit, and to be studious in Reading and Learning of the Scriptures; and to forsake and set aside, as much as they may, all Worldly Cares and Studies. It is hoped that they have clearly determined by Gods Grace, to give themselves wholly to this Vocation: and as much as lieth in them to apply themselves wholly to this one thing; and to draw all their Cares and Studies this way, and to this end; and that by their daily reading and weighing the Scriptures, they will study to wax riper and stronger in their Ministry. These are some of the words of the preparatory Charge given by the Bishop, when he enters upon this Office; before he puts the questions that follow to those, who are to be ordained. What greater force or energy could be put in Words, than is in these? Or where could any be found that are more weighty and more expresse; to shew the intire Dedication of the whole Man, of his Time and Labours, and the separating himself from all other Cares to follow this one thing with all possible Application and Zeal? There is nothing in any Office, Ancient or Modern, that I ever saw which is of this force, so serious and so solemn; and it plainly*

implies not only the *Sense* of the Church upon this whole matter, but likewise their design who framed it, to oblige *Priests*, notwithstanding any Relaxation that the Laws of the Land had still favoured, by the firmest and sacredst bonds possible to attend upon their *Flocks*; and to do their Duties to them. For a bare *Residence*, without labouring, is but a mock *Residence*, since the obligation to it, is in order to a further end; that they may *watch over*, and *feed their Flock*, and not enjoy their Benefices only as Farms, or as *Living*s, according to the gross, but common abuse of our Language, by which the Names of *Cures*, *Parishes*, or *Benefices*, which are the Ecclesiastical Names, are now swallowed up into that of *Living*, which carries a carnal Idea in the very found of the word, and I doubt a more carnal effect on the minds of both Clergy and Laity.

What ever we may be, our Church is free of this Reproach: since this Charge carries their Duty as high, and as home, as any thing that can be laid in Words. And it is further to be considered, that this is not of the Nature of a private Exhortation, in which a Man of lively thoughts, and a warm fancy, may be apt to carry a point too high: It is the constant and uniform voice of the Church. Nor is it of the nature of a Charge, which is only the Sense of him that gives it, and to which the Person to whom it is given, is only Passive: He hears it, but cannot be bound by another Man's Thoughts or Words, further than as the Nature of things binds him. But *Orders* are of the nature of a *Covenant* between *Christ* and the *Clerks*; in which so many Privileges and Powers are granted on the one part, and so many Duties and *Offices* are promised on the other; and this *Charge* being the Preface to it, it is *stipulatory*. It declares the whole *Covenant* of both sides; and so those who receive *Orders* upon it, are as much bound by every part of it, and it becomes as much their own Act, as if they had pronounced or promised it all, in the most formal Words that could be, and indeed the *Answers* and *Promises* that are afterwards made, are only  
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the Application of this, to the particular Persons, for giving them a plainer and livelier Sense of their Obligation, which yet, in it self, was as intire and strong, whether they had made any promise by Words of their own or not.

But to put the matter out of doubt, let us look a little further into the Office, to the Promises that they make, with relation to their Flock, even to such as are, or shall be committed to their Charge. They promise, *That by the Help of the Lord they will give their Faithful Diligence, always so to Minister the Doctrine and Sacraments, and the Discipline of Christ, as the Lord hath commanded, and as this Realm hath received the same, according to the Commandment of God; so that they may teach the People committed to their Care and Charge with all Diligence to keep and observe the same.* This does plainly bind to personal Labour, the mention that is made of *what this Realm has received*, being limited by what follows *according to the commandment of God*, shews that by this is meant the Reformation of the Doctrine and Worship that was then received, and established by Law; by which these general Words, *The Doctrine and Sacraments and Discipline of Christ*, to which all Parties pretend, are determined to our Constitution; so that tho there were some Disorders among us, not yet provided against by the *Laws of the Land*; this does not secure a reserve for them. This is so slight a remark, that I should be ashamed to have made it, if it had not been urged to myself, slight as it is, to justify in point of Conscience, the claiming all such Privileges, or Qualifications, as are still allowed by Law. But I go on to the other Promises: The Clerk says *he will, by the help of God, be ready with all Faithful Diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrines, contrary to God's Word, and to use both publick and private Admonitions, and Exhortations, as well to the sick, as to the whole, within his Cure, as need shall require, and as occasion shall be given.* This is as plainly personal, and constant, as Words can make any thing. And in this is expressed the so much neglected, but so necessary Duty, which Incumbents owe their Flock, in



a private way, visiting, instructing, and admonishing them, which is one of the most useful, and important parts of their Duty, how generally soever it may be disused or forgotten: These being the chief instances and acts of *watching over and feeding the Flock*, that is committed to their Care. In the next place they promise, *That they will be diligent in Prayers, and in reading of the Holy Scriptures, and in such Studies as help to the Knowledge of the same, laying aside, the Study of the World and the Flesh*: This still carries on that great Notion of the Pastoral Care, which runs through this whole Office; that it is to be a Man's intire Business, and is to possess both his thoughts and his time. They do further promise *That they will maintain, and set forward, as much as lieth in them, quietness, peace, and love among all Christian People, and especially among them, that are, or shall be committed to their Charge.*

These are the Vows and Promises that Priests make before they can be Ordained: And to compleat the Stipulation, the Bishop concludes it, with a Prayer to God *who has given them the will to do all these things, to give them also strength, and power to perform the same: that he may accomplish his Work, which he hath begun in them, until the time that he shall come, at the latter day, to judge the quick and the dead.* Upon the whole matter either this is all a piece of gross and impudent Pageantry, dressed up in grave and lofty Expressions, to strike upon the weaker part of Mankind, and to furnish the rest with matter to their profane and impious Scorn; or it must be confessed that Priests come under the most formal and express Engagements, to constant and diligent labour, that can be possibly contrived or set forth in Words. It is upon this, that they are Ordained: So their Ordination being the consummation of this compact, it must be acknowledged that according to the nature of all mutual compacts; a total failure on the one side, does also dissolve all the Obligation that lay on the other: And therefore those who do not perform their part, that do not *Reside and Labour*, they do also in the sight of God, forfeit all the Authority and Privileges that do follow their Orders, as much

as a *Christian* at large, that does not perform his *Baptism* *Now*, forfeits the Rights and Benefits of his Baptism, in the sight of God; tho both in the one, and in the other, it is necessary that for the preventing of disorder and confusion, a Sentence Declaratory of *Excommunication*, in the one, as of *Degradation* in the other, pass before the Visible Acts and Rights, pursuant to those Rites, can be denied.

To all this I will add one thing more, which is, that since our Book of Ordination, is a part of our *Liturgy*, and likewise a part of the *Law* of the *Land*, and since constant Attendance, and diligent Labour is made necessary by it, and since this Law is subsequent to the Act of the 2<sup>d</sup>. of *Henry* the 8<sup>th</sup>. that qualifies so many for *Pluralities*, and *Non-Residence*, and is in plain Terms contrary to it, this as subsequent does repeal all that it contradicts: It is upon all this, a matter that to me seems plain, that by this Law, the other is Repealed, in so far, as it is inconsistent with it. This Argument is by this Consideration made the stronger, that the Act of King *Henry* does not enact that such things shall be, but only reserves *privileges* for such as may be capable of an Exemption from the common and general rules. Now by the Principles of Law, all *Privileges* or Exemptions of that sort, are *odious things*; and the *Constructions of Law* lying hard and heavy against *odious Cases*, it appears to me according to the general grounds of Law, very probable (I speak within bounds, when I say only *probable*) that the Act of Uniformity which makes the *Offices of Ordination* a part of the *Law of England*, is a Repeal of that part of the Act of King *Henry*, which qualifies for *Pluralities*. To conclude, Whatsoever may be the strength of this Plea in Bar to that Act, if our *Faith* given to God and his *Church*, in the most express and plainest words possible, does bind, if *Promises* given at the *Altar* do oblige, and if a *Stipulation*, in the consideration of which *Orders* are given, is sacred and of an indispensable obligation, then, I am sure, this is.

To make the whole matter yet the stronger, this Office is to be compleated with a *Communion*: So that upon  
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this occasion, that is not only a piece of Religious Devotion, accompanying it ; but it is the taking the *Sacrament* upon the *Stipulation* that has been made, between the Priest and the Church : So that those who have framed this Office, have certainly intended by all the ways that they could think on, and by the weightiest words they could choose, to make the sense of the *Priestly Function*, and of the *Duties* belonging to it, give deep and strong impressions to such as are *Ordained*. I have compared with it, all the Exhortations that are in all the Offices I could find, *Ancient* and *Modern*, whether of the *Greek* or the *Latin* Church, and this must be said of *Ours*, without any sort of partiality to our own *Forms*, that no sort of comparison can be made between *Ours* and all the others : and that as much as *ours* is more simple than those as to its *Rites* and *Ceremonies*, which swell up other *Offices*, so much is it more grave and weighty in the *Exhortations*, *Collects* and *Sponsions* that are made in it. In the *Roman Pontifical* no promises are demanded of *Priests*, but only that of *Obedience* : *Bishops* in a corrupted state of the Church, taking care only of their own Authority, while they neglected more important obligations.

In the *Office of Consecrating Bishops* ; as all the *Sponsions* made by them, when they were ordained *Priests*, are to be considered as still binding, since the Inferiour *Office* does still subsist in the Superiour ; so there are new ones superadded, proportioned to the exaltation of *Dignity* and *Authority* that accompanies that *Office*. In the *Roman Pontifical*, there are indeed questions put to a Bishop, before he is Consecrated : but of all these the first only is that which has any relation to his *Flock* : which is in these words : *Wilt thou teach the people over whom thou art to be set, both by thy Example and Doctrine : those things that thou learnst out of the Holy Scripture?* All the rest are general, and relate only to his *Conversation* ; but not at all to his *Labours* in his *Diocess* : Whereas on the contrary, the engagements in our *Office* do regard not only a Bishop's own *Conversation*, but chiefly his Duty to his

his People: he declares that he is determined to instruct the People committed to his Charge, out of the Holy Scriptures: That he will study them, so as to be able by them, to teach and exhort, with wholesome Doctrine; and withstand and convince the Gain-sayers: That he will be ready with all faithful Diligence, to banish and drive away all erroneous and strange Doctrine, contrary to God's word: And both privately and openly to call upon and encourage others to the same: That he will maintain and set forward as much as lies in him; quietness, love, and peace among all Men; and correct and punish such as be unruly, disobedient, and criminous, within his Diocese: According to such Authority as he has. In particular, He promises to be Faithful in ordaining, sending, or laying Hands upon others: He promises also to shew himself to be gentle, and merciful for Christ's sake, to poor and needy people, and to all Strangers destitute of Help. These are the Covenants and Promises under which Bishops are put, which are again reinforced upon them, in the Charge that is given immediately after their Consecration, when the Bible is put in their Hands; Give heed to Reading, Exhortation, and Doctrine: Think upon the things contained in this Book; be diligent in them, that the increase coming thereby may be manifest unto all Men. Take heed unto thy Self, and to Doctrine, and be diligent in doing them, for by doing this thou shalt both save thy self and them that hear thee. Be thou to the Flock of Christ, a Shepherd, not a Wolf; feed them, devour them not: Hold up the weak, heal the sick, bind up the broken, bring again the outcasts, seek the lost: Be so merciful that you be not too remiss: So Minister Discipline that you forget not Mercy: That when the chief Shepherd shall appear, you may receive the never fading Crown of Glory, through Jesus Christ our Lord. In these Words, the great Lines of our Duty are drawn, in very expressive and comprehensive Terms. We have the several Branches of our Function, both as to Preaching and Governing very solemnly laid upon us: And both in this Office as well as in all the other Offices that I have seen, it appears that the constant sense of all Churches, in all Ages, has been that Preaching was the Bishops great Duty, and



that he ought to lay himself out in it most particularly.

I shall only add one advice to all this, before I leave this Article of the Sence of our Church in this matter; both to those, who intend to take *Orders*, and to those who have already taken them. As for such as do intend to dedicate themselves to the service of the Church, they ought to read over these *Offices* frequently; and to ask themselves solemnly, as in the presence of God, Whether they can with a good Conscience, make those answers which the Book prescribes, or not? and not to venture on offering themselves to *Orders*, till they know that they dare and may safely do it. Every person who looks that way, ought at least on every Ordination Sunday, after he has once formed the resolution of dedicating himself to this work, to go over the Office seriously with himself, and to consider in what disposition or preparation of mind he is; suitable to what he finds laid down in it. But I should add to this, that for a Year before he comes to be *ordained*, he should every first Sunday of the Month read over the Office very deliberately; and frame resolutions, conform to the several parts of it, and if he can, receive the Sacrament upon it, with a special set of private Devotions relating to his intentions. As the time of his *Ordination* draws near, he ought to return the oftner to those exercises. It will be no hard task for him to read these over every Sunday, during the last Quarter before his *Ordination*; and to do that yet more solemnly, every day of the week in which he is to be *ordained*: and to joyn a greater earnestness of *fasting* and *prayer* with it on the Fast-days of his Ember Week.

Here is no hard imposition. The performance is as easie in it self, as it will be successful in its effects. If I did not consider, rather what the Age can bear, than what were to be wished for, I would add a great many severe Rules calculated to the Notions of the Primitive times. But if this advice were put in practice, it is to be hoped, that it would set back many who come to be *ordained*, without considering duly, either what it is that they ask, or what it is that is to be asked of them: which some do with so  
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supine a negligence, that we plainly see that they have not so much as read the *Office*, or at least that they have done it in so slight a manner, that they have formed no clear Notions upon any part of it, and least of all, upon those parts to which they themselves are to make answers. And as such a method as I have proposed would probably strike some with a due awe of Divine matters, so as to keep them at a distance, till they were in some sort prepared for them; so it would oblige such as came to it, to bring along with them a serious temper of mind, and such a preparation of soul as might make that their *Orders* should be a blessing to them, as well as they themselves should be a blessing to the *Church*. It must be the greatest joy of a *Bishops* life, who truly minds his *duty* in this weighty trust of *sending out Labourers into Gods Vineyard*; to Ordain such persons of whom he has just grounds to hope, that they shall do their *duty*, faithfully, in reaping that *Harvest*. He reckons these as his Children indeed, who are to be his *strength* and *support*, his *fellow Labourers* and *Helpers*, his *Crown* and his *Glory*. But on the other hand, how heavy a part of his *Office* must it be to *Ordain* those against whom, perhaps there lies no just objection, so that according to the Constitution and Rules of the Church, he cannot deny them; and yet he sees nothing in them that gives him courage or cheerfulness. They do not seem to have that *love* to God, that *zeal* for Christ, that *tenderness* for souls, that *meekness* and *humility*, that *mortification* and *deadness* to the world, that becomes the Character and Profession which they undertake; so that his heart fails him, and his hands tremble when he goes to *Ordain* them.

My next advice shall be to those, who are already in *Orders*, that they will at least four times a year, on the Ordination Sundays, read over the *Offices* of the Degrees of the Church in which they are: and will particularly consider the Charge that was given, and the Answers that were made by them; and then ask themselves as before God, who will *Judge* them at the *Great-day*, upon their Religious performance of them, whether they have been true to them or

not that so they may humble themselves for their Errours, and Omissions, and may renew their *Vows* for the future, and so to be going on from Quarter to Quarter, through the whole course of their *Ministry* observing still what ground they gain, and what progress they make, to such as have a right Sense of their Duty, this will be no hard performance. It will give a vast joy to those that can go through it with some measure of assurance, and find, that tho in the midst of *many temptations* and of much weakness, they are sincerely and seriously going on in their work to the best of their skill, and to the utmost of their power: So that their Consciences say within them, and that without the partialities of self-love and flattery, *Well done, good and faithful servant*. The hearing of this said within, upon true grounds, being the certainest Evidence possible that it shall be publickly said at the Last and Great-day. This exercise will also offer checks to a man that looks for them; and intends both to understand his errours, and to cleanse himself from them. It will upon the whole matter, make *Clergy-Men* go on with their Profession, as the Business and Labour of their Lives.

Having known the very good effect that this Method has had on some, I dare the more confidently recommend it to all others.

Before I conclude this Chapter, I will shew what Rules our Reformers had prepared with Relation to *Non-Residence*, and *Pluralities*; which tho they never passed into Laws, and so have no binding force with them, yet in these we see what was the sense of those that prepared our *Offices*, and that were the chief Instruments in that blessed Work of our *Reformation*. The 12th. Chapter of the Title, concerning those that were to be admitted to *Ecclesiastical Benefices*, runs thus. *Whereas, when many Benefices are conferred on one Person, every one of these must be served with less order and exactness, and many learned Men, who are not provided, are by that means shut out; therefore, such as examine the Persons who are proposed for Benefices, are to ask every one of them, whether he has at that time another Benefice or not, and if he confesses that he has, then they*

they shall not consent to his obtaining that to which he is presented, or the first Benefice shall be made void, as in case of Death, so that the Patron may present any other Person to it. Chap. 13. is against Dispensations, in these Words. No Man shall hereafter be capable of any Privilege, by virtue of which he may hold more Parishes than one. But such as have already obtained any such Dispensations for Pluralities, shall not be deprived of the effects of them, by virtue of this Law. The 14th. Chapter relates to Residence, in these Words. If any Man by reason of Age or Sickness, is disabled from discharging his Duty, or if he has any just cause of absence for some time, that shall be approved of by the Bishop, he must take care to place a worthy Person, to serve during his absence. But the Bishops ought to take a special Care, that upon no regard whatsoever, any Person may, upon feigned or pretended Reasons, be suffered to be longer absent from his Parish, than a real necessity shall require.

These are some of the Rules which were then prepared, and happy had it been for our Church, if that whole work of the Reformation of the Ecclesiastical Law, had been then settled among us. Then we might justly have said, that our Reformation was compleat, and not have lamented as our Church still does in the Office of Communion that the godly Discipline which was in the Primitive Church is not yet restored, how much, and how long soever it has been wished for. It is more than probable that we should neither have had Schisms, nor Civil Wars, if that great design had not been abortive. If but the 19th. and 20th. Titles of that work, which treat of the public offices, and Officers in the Church, had become a part of our Law, and been duly executed, we should indeed have had matter of glorying in the World.

In the Canons of the Year 1571. tho there was not then strength enough in the Church, to cure so inveterate a Disease, as Non-Residence, yet she expressed her detestation of it, in these Words. The absence of a Pastor from the Lord's Flock; and that supine negligence and abandoning of the Ministry, which we observe in many, is a thing vile in it self, odious to the People, and pernicious to the Church of God; therefore, we exhort all the Pastors of Churches, in our Lord Jesus, that they will as soon as

*is possible, come to their Churches, and diligently Preach the Gospel, and according to the value of their Livings, that they will keep House, and hospitably relieve the Poor.* It is true, all this is much lessened by the last Words of that Article, *That every Year they must reside at least Threescore daies upon their Benefices.* By the Canons made at that time, Pluralities were also limited to 20 miles distance. But this was enlarged to 30 miles, by the Canons in the Year 1597. Yet by these the Pluralist was required to spend a good part of the Year in both his Benefices. And upon this, has the matter rested ever since; but there is no express definition made how far that general word of a good part of the Year is to be understood.

I will not to this add a long invidious *History* of all the attempts that have been made for the *Reforming* these abuses, nor the methods that have been made use of to defeat them. They have been but too successful, so that we still groan under our abuses; and do not know when the time shall come in which we shall be freed from them. The defenders of those abuses, who get too much by them, to be willing to part with them, have made great use of this, that it was the *Puritan Party*, that during *Q. Elizabeth*, and *K. James the 1<sup>st</sup>*. Reign, promoted these *Bills*, to render the Church *odious*: Whereas, it seems more probable, that those who set them forward, what invidious Characters soever their Enemies might put them under, were really the *Friends of the Church*; and that they intended to preserve it, by freeing it from so crying, and so visible an abuse: which gives an offence and scandal, that is not found out by much learning, or great observation; but arises so evidently out of the nature of things, that a small measure of *common sense*, helps every one to see it, and to be deeply prejudic'd against it. But since our Church has fallen under the evils and mischiefs of *Schism*, none of those who divide from us, have made any more attempts this way; but seem rather to be not ill pleased, that such *Scandals* should be still among us, as hoping that this is so great a load upon our Church, that it both weakens our strength, and lessens our Authority. It is certainly the interest of an Enemy to suffer the body to which he opposes himself to lie under as many Prejudices,  
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and to be liable to as much censure, as is possible; whereas every good and wise Friend studies to preserve that body to which he unites himself, by freeing it from every thing that may render it less acceptable, and less useful.

Here I will leave this Argument, having I think said enough, to convince all, that have a true Zeal to our Church, and that think themselves bound in conscience to obey its Rules, and that seem to have a particular jealousy of the *Civil Powers*, breaking in too far upon the *Ecclesiastical Authority*, that there can be nothing more plain and express, than that our Church intends to bring all her *Priests* under the strictest obligations possible, to constant and personal Labour, and that in this she pursues the designs and Canons, not only of the *Primitive*, and *best* times, but even of the *worst* Ages, Since none were ever so corrupt as not to condemn those abuses by Canon, even when they maintained them in practice. She does not only bind *them* to this, by the Charge she appoints to be given, but also by the *Vows* and *Promises* that she demands of such as are *Ordained*. When all this is laid together, and when there stands nothing on the other side, to balance it, but a Law made in a very bad time, that took away some *abuses*, but left pretences to cover others; Can any man that weighs these things together, in the sight of God, and that believes he must answer to him for this at the great Day, think, that the one, how strong soever it may be in his favour at an earthly Tribunal, will be of any force in that *last and dreadful Judgment*. This I leave upon all Mens Consciences; hoping that *they will so judge themselves, that they shall not be judged of the Lord*.



## C H A P. VII.

*Of the due preparation of such as may and ought to be put in Orders.*

THE greatest good that one can hope to do in this World is upon young Persons, who have not yet taken their ply, and are not spoiled with Prejudices, and wrong Notions. Those who have taken an ill one at first, will neither be at the pains to look over their Notions, nor turn to new Methods; nor will they by any change of Practice, seem to confess that they were once in the wrong; so that if Matters that are amiss, can be mended or set right, it must be by giving those that have not yet set out, and that are not yet engaged, truer views, and juster Idea's of things. I will therefore here lay down the model, upon which a Clerk is to be formed, and will begin with such things as ought to be previous and preparatory to his being initiated into Orders.

These are of two sorts, the one is of such preparations as are necessary to give his Heart and Soul a right temper, and a true sense of things: The other is of such studies as are necessary to enable him to go through with the several parts of his Duty. Both are necessary, but the first is the more indispensable of the two; for a Man of a good Soul, may with a moderate proportion of knowledge do great Service in the Church, especially if he is suited with an employment, that is not above his Talent: Whereas unsanctified knowledge puffs up; is insolent and unquiet, it gives great scandal, and occasions much distraction in the Church. In treating of these qualifications, I will watch over my thoughts, not to let them rise to a pitch that is above what the common frailties of humane Nature, or the Age we live in, can bear: and after all, if in any thing I may seem to exceed these measures, it is to be considered, that it is natural in proposing the Ideas of things, to carry them to what is wished for, which is but too often beyond what can be expected; considering both the corruption of mankind and of these degenerated times.

*First,*

First of all then, he that intends to dedicate himself to the Church, ought, from the time that he takes up any such Resolution, to enter upon a greater Decency of Behaviour, that his Mind may not be vitiated by ill Habits; which may both give such bad Characters of him, as may stick long on him afterwards, and make such ill Impressions on himself, as may not be easily worn out or defaced. He ought, above all things, to possess himself with a high Sense of the *Christian Religion*, of its Truth and Excellence, of the Value of Souls, of the Dignity of the *Pastoral Care*, of the Honour of *God*, of the Sacredness of *Holy Functions*, and of the Great *Trust* that is committed to those who are set apart from the World, and dedicated to God and to his Church. He who looks this way, must break himself to the Appetites of Pleasure, or Wealth, of Ambition, or Authority; he must consider that the *Religion*, in which he intends to Officiate, calls all Men to great Purity and Vertue; to a Probity and Innocence of Manners, to a Meekness and Gentleness, to a Humility and Self-denial, to a Contempt of the World and a Heavenly Mindedness, to a Patient Resignation to the Will of God, and a readiness to bear the Cross, in the hopes of that everlasting Reward, which is reserved for Christians in another State: All which was eminently recommended, by the unblemish'd Pattern that the Author of this *Religion*, has set to all that pretend to be his Followers. These being the Obligations which a Preacher of the Gospel is to lay daily upon all his Hearers, he ought certainly to accustom himself often to consider seriously of them; and to think how Shameless and Impudent a thing it will be in him, to perform *Offices* suitable to all these, and that do suppose them, to be Instructing the People, and Exhorting them to the Practice of them, unless he is in *some sort* all this himself, which he teaches others to be.

Indeed to be tied to such an Employment, while one has not an inward Conformity to it, and Complacency in it, is both the most unbecoming, the most unpleasant, and the most uncomfortable State of Life imaginable. Such a Person will be exposed to all Mens Censures and Reproaches, who when they see things amiss in his Conduct, do not only Reproach him, but the whole Church and Body, to which he belongs; and which is more, the

Religion which he seems to recommend by his Discourses, though his Life and Actions, which will always pass for the most real Declaration of his inward Sentiments, are a visible and continual opposition to it. On all these things, he whose Thoughts carry him towards the Church, ought to reflect frequently: Nothing is so odious as a Man that disagrees with his Character, a Soldier that is a *Coward*, a Courtier that is *Brutal*, an Ambassador that is *Abject*, are not such unseemly things, as a bad or vicious, a drunken or dissolute *Clergy-man*. But though his Scandals should not rise up to so high a pitch, even a Proud and Passionate, a Worldly Minded and Covetous *Priest*, gives the Lye to his Discourses so palpably, that he cannot expect they should have much weight. Nor is such a Man's State of Life less unpleasant to himself, than it is unbecoming. He is obliged to be often performing *Offices*, and pronouncing *Discourses*, in which, if he is not a Good Man, he not only has no Pleasure, but must have a formed Aversion to them. They must be the heaviest Burden of his Life, he must often feel secret Challenges within; and though he as often silences these, yet such unwelcome Reflections are uncomfortable things. He is forced to manage himself with a perpetual constraint, and to observe a *decorum* in his Deportment, lest he fall under a more publick Censure: Now to be bound to act a Part, and live with restraint ones whole Life, must be a very Melancholy thing. He cannot go so quite out of sight of Religion, and Convictions, as other bad Men do, who live in a perpetual hurry, and a total forgetfulness of Divine Matters: They have no Checks, because they are as seldom in the way to find them, as is possible. But a *Clerk* cannot keep himself out of their way; he must remember them, and speak of them, at least upon some occasions, whether he will or no: He has no other way to secure himself against them, but by trying what he can do, to make himself absolutely disbelieve them. *Negative Atheism*, that is, a total neglect of all Religion, is but too easily arrived at; yet this will not serve its turn, he must build his Atheism upon some Bottom, that he may find quiet in it. If he is an Ignorant Man, he is not furnished with those flights of Wit, and shews of Learning, that must support it: But if he is really Learned, he will soon be beaten out

out of them; for a Learned Atheism is so hard a thing to be conceived, that unless a Man's Powers are first strangely vitiated, it is not easie to see how any one can bring himself to it. There is nothing that can settle the quiet of an ill Priest's Mind and Life, but a stupid Formality, and a *Callus* that he Contracts, by his insensible way of handling Divine Matters; by which he becomes hardned against them. But if this settles him by stupifying his Powers, it does put also him so far out of the reach of Conviction, in all the ordinary methods of Grace, that it is scarce possible he can ever be awakned; and by Consequence that he can be saved; and if he perishes, he must fall into the lowest degree of Misery, even to the Portion of *Hypocrites*: For his whole Life has been a course of *Hypocrisie* in the strictest Sence of the Word, which is the Acting of a Part, and the Counterfeiting another Person. His Sins have in them all possible Aggravations; they are against Knowledge and against Vows, and contrary to his Character; they carry in them a deliberate Contempt of all the Truths and Obligations of Religion; and if he perishes, he does not perish alone, but carries a Shoal down with him, either of those who have perished in Ignorance, through his neglect; or of those who have been hardned in their Sins, through his ill Example: And since all this must be put to his Account, it may be justly inferred from hence, That no man can have a heavier share in the miseries of another State, than profane and wicked *Clerks*. On all these things he ought to imploy his thoughts frequently, who intends to dedicate himself to God, that so he may firmly resolve not to go on with it, till he feels such Seeds and Beginnings of good things in himself, that he has reason to hope, that through the Grace and Assistance of God, he will be an Example to others.

He ought more particularly to examine himself, whether he has that Soft and Gentle, that Meek and Humble, and that Charitable and Compassionate Temper, which the Gospel does so much press upon all Christians; that shined so eminently through the whole Life of the Blessed Author of it; and which he has so singularly recommended to all his Followers; and that has in it so many Charms and Attractives, which do not only commend those who have these amiable Vertues, but which is much



more to be regarded, they give them vast advantages in recommending the Doctrine of our Saviour to their People. They are the true ground of that Christian Wisdom and Discretion, and of that grave and calm Deportment, by which the Clergy ought to carry on and maintain their Authority. A haughty and huffing Humour, an Impatient and insolent Temper, a loftiness of Deportment, and a peevishness of Spirit, rendring the Lives of the *Clergy*, for the most part, bitter to themselves, and their Labours, how valuable soever otherwise they may be, unacceptable and useless to their People. A Clergyman must be prepared to bear Injuries, to endure much unjust Censure and Calumny, to see himself often neglected, and others preferred to him, in the esteem of the People. He that takes all this ill, that resents it, and complains of it, does thereby give himself much disquiet, and to be sure, he will, through his Peevishness, rather encrease than lessen that Contempt, under which he is so uneasy; which is both better born, and sooner overcome, by a meek and a lowly Temper. A Man of this Disposition affects no Singularities, unless the faultiness of those about him, makes his doing his Duty to be a *Singularity*: He does not study to lessen the value that is due to others, on design to encrease his own: His low thoughts of himself, make that he is neither aspiring, nor envying such as are advanced: He is prepared to stay till God in his Providence thinks fit to raise him: He studies only to deserve Preferment, and leaves to others the *wringing* Posts of Advantage out of the Hands of those that give them. Such a Preparation of Mind in a Clergy-man, disposes him to be Happy in whatsoever Station he may be put, and renders the Church happy in him; for Men so moulded, even though their Talents should be but mean, are shining Lights, that may perhaps be at first despised, as Men of a low size, that have not Greatness of Soul enough to aspire, but when they have been seen and known so long; that all appears to be sincere, and that the Principle from whence this flows, is rightly considered, then every thing that they say or do, must have its due weight: The plainest and simplest things that they say have a Beauty in them, and will be hearkned to as Oracles.

But



But a Man that intends to prepare himself right for the Ministry of the Church, must indeed above all things, endeavour to break himself to the love of the World, either of the Wealth, the Pomp, or the Pleasures of it. He must learn to be content with plain and simple Diet; and often even abridge that, by true *Fasting*: I do not call *Fasting*, a trifling distinction of Meats, but a lessening of the quantity, as well as the quality, and a contracting the time spent at Meals, that so he may have a greater Freedom both in his Time, and in his Thoughts; that he may be more alone, and pray and meditate more, and that what he saves out of his Meals, he may give to the Poor. This is, in short, the true Measure and right Use of *Fasting*. In cold Climates, an abstinence till Night, may create Disorders, and raise such a Disturbance both in the Appetite, and in the Digestion; that this managed upon the practices of other Countries, especially in young Persons, may really distract instead of furthering those who do it Indiscreetly. In short, *Fasting*, unless joyned with Prayer and Almsgiving, is of no Value in the sight of God. It is a vast Advantage to a Man to be broken to the Niceties of his Palate, to be content with plain Food, and even to dislike Delicacies and studied Dishes. This will make him easie in narrower Circumstances; since a plain Bill of Fare is soon discharged. A lover of his Appetites, and a slave to his Taste, makes but a mean Figure among Men, and a very scurvy one among Clergy-men.

This deadness to the World must raise one above the Affections of Pomp and State, of Attendance and high Living. Which to a Philosophical Mind will be heavy, when the Circumstances he is in, seem to impose and force it on him. And therefore he who has a right Sence, finds it is almost all he can do, to bear those things which the Tyranny of Custom or false Opinions put upon him: So far is he from longing for them. A Man that is truly dead to the World, would chuse much rather to live in a lowly and narrow Figure; than to be obliged to enter into the Methods of the greatness of this World; into which, if the Constitutions and Forms of a Church and Kingdom put him, yet he feels himself in an unnatural and uncouth Posture: It is contrary to his own Genius and Relish of things;  
and

and therefore he does not court nor desire such a situation, but even while he is in it, he shows such a Neglect of the State of it, and so much Indifference and Humility in it, that it appears how little power those things have over his Mind, and how little they are able to subdue and corrupt it. This mortified Man must likewise become dead to all the Designs and Projects of making a Family, or of raising the Fortunes of those that are nearly related to him: He must be Bountiful and Charitable; and tho' it is not only lawful to him, but a necessary Duty incumbent on him, to make due provision for his Family, if he has any, yet this must be so moderated that no vain nor sordid Designs, no indirect nor unbecoming Arts, may mix in it; no excessive Wealth nor great Projects must appear; he must be contented with such a proportion, as may set his Children in the way of a vertuous and liberal Education; such as may secure them from Scandal and Necessity, and put them in a Capacity to serve God and their Generation in some honest Employment. But he who brings along with him, a Voluptuous, an Ambitious or a Covetous Mind, that is Carnal and Earthly minded, comes as a *Hireling to feed himself and not the Flock, he comes to Steal and to Destroy*. Upon all, this great Reflection is to be made concerning the Motives that determine one to offer himself to this Employment.

In the first beginnings of Christianity, no Man could reasonably think of taking *Orders*, unless he had in him the *Spirit of Martyrdom*. He was to look for nothing in this Service, but Labour and Persecution: He was indeed to *live of the Altar*, and that was all the Portion that he was to expect in this World. In those Days an extraordinary Measure of Zeal and Devotion was necessary, to engage Men to so hard and difficult a Province, that how great soever its Reward might be in another World, had nothing to look for in this, but a narrow Provision, and the first and largest share of the Cross: They were the best known, the most exposed, and the soonest fallen upon in the Persecution. But their Services and their Sufferings did so much recommend that Function in the succeeding Ages, that the Faithful thought they could never do enough to express their Value for it. The Church came to be Richly endowed; and tho' Superstition had raised

raised this out of measure, yet the Extreme went as far to the other hand at the Reformation, when the *Church* was almost stripped of all its Patrimony, and a great many Churches were left so poor, that there was not in most Places, a sufficient; nay, not so much as a necessary Maintenance, reserved for those that were to minister in Holy Things. But it is to be acknowledged that there are such Remnants preserved, that many *Benefices* of the Church still may, and perhaps do but too much, work upon Mens corrupt Principles, their Ambition, and their Covetousness: And it is surely to be apprehended, that of those who present themselves at the *Altar*, a great part comes, as those who followed Christ, for the *Loaves*: Because of the good Prospect they have of making their Fortunes by the Church.

If this Point should be carried too far, it might perhaps seem to be a pitch above Humane Nature; and certainly very far above the degeneracy of the Age we live in: I shall therefore lay this matter, with as large an allowance, as I think it can bear. It is certain, that since God has made us to be a *Compound of Soul and Body*, it is not only *lawful* but *suitable* to the order of Nature, for us in the Choice we make of the *state of Life* that we intend to pursue, to consider our *Bodies*, in the next place after our *Souls*: Yet we ought certainly to begin with our *Souls*, with the Powers and Faculties that are in them, and consider well of what Temper they are; and what our Measure and Capacity is; that so we may chuse such a course of *Life*, for which we seem to be fitted, and in which we may probably do the most good both to our selves and others: From hence we ought to take our Aims and Measures chiefly: But in the next place, we not only may, but ought to consider our *Bodies*, how they shall be maintained, in a way suitable to that *state of Life*, into which we are engaged. Therefore tho' no Man can with a good Conscience, begin upon a worldly Account, and resolve to dedicate himself to the Church, merely out of Carnal regard; such as an Advowson in his Family, a Friend that will Promote him, or any other suchlike Prospect, till he has first consulted his Temper and Disposition his Talents and his Capacities; yet, tho' it is not Lawful to make the Regards of this World his first Consideration, and it cannot be denied to be a perfecter state, if a Man should offer himself

himself to the Church, having whereon to support himself, without any Assistance or Reward out of its Patrimony; and to be nearer to S. Paul's practice, *whose hands ministered to his necessities*, and who reckoned that in this he had *whereof to glory, that he was not burthensome to the Churches*: Yet it is, without doubt, *Lawful* for a Man to Design that he may subsist in and out of the Service of the Church: But then these Designs must be limited to a *Subsistence*, to such a moderate Proportion, as may maintain one in that state of Life. And must not be let fly by a restless Ambition, and an insatiable Covetousness, as a ravenous Bird of prey, does at all Game. There must not be a perpetual Enquiry into the Value of Benefices; and a constant Importuning of such as give them: If *Laws* have been made in some *States* restraining all *Ambitus* and aspirings to Civil Employments, certainly it were much more reasonable to put a stop to the scandalous Importunities, that are every where complained of; and no where more visible and more offensive than at *Court*. This gives a Prejudice to Men that are otherwise enclined enough to search for one, that can never be removed, but by putting an effectual bar in the way of that scrambling for Benefices and Preferments; which will ever make the *Lay* part of Mankind conclude, that let us pretend what we will, *Covetousness* and *Ambition* are our true Motives, and our chief *Vocation*. It is true, the strange Practices of many *Patrons*, and the Constitution of most *Courts*, give a colour to excuse so great an Indecency. Men are generally successful in those Practices, and as long as Humane Nature is so strong, as all Men feel it to be, it will be hard to divert them from a Method which is so common, that to act otherwise would look like an affectation of Singularity; and many apprehend, that they must languish in Misery and Necessity if they are wanting to themselves, in so general a Practice. And, indeed, if *Patrons*, but chiefly if *Princes* would effectually cure this Disease which gives them so much Trouble, as well as Offence, they must resolve to distribute those Benefices that are in their *Gift*, with so visible a Regard to true Goodness and real Merit, and with so firm and so constant an Opposition to *Application* and *Importunity*, that it may appear that the only way to Advancement, is to live well, to study hard,



hard, to stay at home, and labour diligently; and that *Applications* by the *Persons* themselves, or any set on by them shall always put those back who make them: This would more effectually cure so great an Evil, than all that can be said against it. One *successful suiter* who carries his *Point*, will promote this *Disorder*, more than Twenty Repulses of others; for unless the *Rule* is severely carried on, every one will run into it and hope to prosper as well as he, who they see has got his end in it. If those who have the Disposition of *Benefices*, to which the *Cure of Souls* is annexed, did consider this as a *Trust*, lodged with them, for which they must answer to God, and that they shall be in a great measure accountable for the *Souls*, that may be lost through the bad choice that they make, knowing it to be bad; it, I say, they had this more in their Thoughts, than so many Scores of Pounds, as the Living amounts to; and thought themselves really bound, as without doubt they are, to seek out Good and Worthy Men, well qualified and duely prepared, according to the Nature of that Benefice which they are to give; then we might hope to see men make it their chief Study, to qualify themselves aright; to order their Lives, and frame their Minds, as they ought to do, and to carry on their Studies with all Application and Diligence; but as long as the *short Methods*, of Application, Friendship, or Interest, are more effectual than the *long and hard way*, of Labour and Study; Human Nature will always carry men to go the surest, the easiest, and the quickest way to work.

After all I wish it were well considered, by all *Clerks*, what it is to run without being either *called* or *sent*; and so to thrust ones self into the *Vineyard*, without staying, till God by his Providence puts a piece of his work in his Hands; this will give a man a vast ease in his Thoughts, and a great satisfaction in all his Labours, if he knows that no Practices of his own, but merely the Directions of Providence, have put him in a Post. He may well trust the Effects of a thing to God, when the Causes of it do plainly flow from him. And though this will appear to a great many a hard Saying, so that few will be able to bear it, yet I must add this to the encouragement and comfort of such as can resolve to deliver themselves up to the Conduct



and Directions of *Providence*, that I never yet knew any one of those few (too few I confess they have been) who were possessed with this *Mixim*, and that have followed it exactly, that have not found the Fruit of it even in this World. A watchful Care hath hovered over them: Instruments have been raised up, and Accidents have happened to them so prosperously, as if there had been a *secret Design* of Heaven by blessing them so *signally*, to encourage others to follow their *Measures*, to depend on God, to deliver themselves up to his Care, and to wait till he opens a way for their being Employed, and settled in such a Portion of his Husbandry, as he shall think fit to assign to them.

These are Preparations of Mind, with which a *Clerk* is to be formed and seasoned: And in order to this, he must read the Scriptures much, he must get a great deal of those Passages in them, that relate to these things, by heart, and repeat them often to himself; in particular many of the most tender and melting *Psalms*, and many of the most comprehensive Passages in the *Epistles*; that by the frequent reflecting on these, he may fill his Memory with Noble Notions, and right Idea's of things: The Book of *Proverbs*, but chiefly *Ecclesiastes*, if he can get to understand it, will beget in him a right view of the World, a just value of Things, and a contempt of many Objects that shine with a false Luitre, but have no true Worth in them. Some of the Books taught at *Schools*, if read afterwards, when one is more capable to observe the Sence of them, may be of great use to promote this Temper. *Tully's Offices* will give the Mind a noble set; all his Philosophical Discourses, but chiefly his *Consolation*; which though some Criticks will not allow to be his, because they fancy the *Stile* has not all the force and beauty in it that was peculiar to him, yet is certainly the best Piece of them all; these, I say, give a good *savour* to those who read them much. The Satyrical Poets, *Horace*, *Juvenal* and *Perseus* may contribute wonderfully to give a man a Detestation of Vice, and a Contempt of the common Methods of mankind; which they have set out in such true Colours, that they must give a very generous Sense to those who delight in reading them often. *Perseus* his Second *Satyr*, may well pass for one of the best Lectures in Divinity. *Hieracles* upon *Pythagoras's Verses*, *Plutarch's Lives*; and

and above all the Books of Heathenism, *Epicætus* and *Marcus Aurelius*, contain such Instructions, that one cannot read them too often, nor repass them too frequently in his thoughts. But when I speak of reading these Books, I do not mean only to run through them, as one does through a Book of History, or of Notions; they must be read and weighed with great Care, till one is become a *Master* of all the Thoughts that are in them: They are to be often turned in ones Mind, till he is thereby wrought up to some Degrees of that Temper, which they propole: And as for Christian Books, in order to the framing of ones Mind aright, I shall only Recommend *The whole Duty of Man*, *Dr. Sherlock of Death and Judgment*, and *Dr. Scot's Books*, in particular that great distinction that runs through them, of the *means* and of the *ends* of Religion. To all which I shall add one small Book more, which is to me ever *new and fresh*, gives always good Thoughts and a Noble Temper, *Thomas a Kempis of the Imitation of Christ*. By the frequent reading of these Books, by the relish that one has in them, by the delight they give, and the Effects they produce, a man will plainly perceive, whether his Soul is made for Divine Matters or not, what suitableness there is between him and them; and whether he is yet touched with such a Sense of Religion, as to be capable of dedicating himself to it.

I am far from thinking that no man is fit to be a *Priest*, that has not the Temper which I have been describing, quite up to that height in which I have set it forth; but this I will positively say, That he who has not the Seeds of it planted in him, who has not these Principles, and Resolutions formed to pursue them, and to improve and perfect himself in them, is in no wise worthy of that Holy Character. If these things are begun in him, if they are yet but as a Grain of Mustard-seed, yet if there is a Life in them, and a Vital Sense of the Tendencies and Effects they must have; such a Person, so moulded, with those Notions and Impressions, and such only are qualified, so as to be able to say with Truth and Assurance, that they *trust they are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to undertake that Office*.

So far have I dispatch'd the first and chief Part of the Preparation necessary before Orders. The other Branch of it, re-

lates to their Learning, and to the Knowledge that is necessary. I confess I look upon this as so much Inferiour to the other, and have been convinced by so much Experience, that a great Measure of Piety, with a very small Proportion of Learning, will carry one a great way, that I may perhaps be thought to come as far short in this, as I might seem to exceed in the other. I will not here enter into a Discourse of *Theological Learning*, of the measure that is necessary to make a *Compleat Divine*, and of the methods to attain it. I intend only to lay down here, that which I look on as the lowest Degree, and as that which seems indispensably necessary, to one that is to be a *Priest*. He must then understand the *New Testament* well. This is the *Text* of our *Religion*, that which we Preach and explain to others; therefore a man ought to read this so often over, that he may have an Idea of the whole Book in his Head, and of all the Parts of it. He cannot have this so sure, unless he understands the *Greek* so well, as to be able to find out the meaning of every Period in it, at least of the Words and Phrases of it; any Book of *Annotations* or *Paraphrase* upon it, is a great help to a beginner, *Grotius*, *Hammond*, and *Lightfoot* are the best. But the having a great deal of the Practical and Easie Parts of it, such as relate to Mens Lives and their Duties, such as strike and awaken, direct, comfort, or terrifie, are much more necessary than the more abstruse Parts. In short, the being able to state right the Grounds of our *Hope*, and the Terms of *Salvation*, and the having a clear and ready view of the *New Covenant in Christ Jesus*, is of such absolute necessity, that it is a profaning of *Orders*; and a defiling of the *Sanctuary*, to bring any into it, that do not rightly understand this Matter in its whole extent. Bishop *Pearson* on the *Creed* is a Book of great Learning, and profound exactness. Dr. *Barrow* has opened it with more simplicity; and Dr. *Townerson* more practically; one or other of these must be well read and considered: But when I say *read*, I mean *read* and *read* over again, so oft that one is *Master* of one of these Books; he must write Notes out of them, and make Abridgements of them; and turn them so oft in his Thoughts, that he must thoroughly understand, and well remember them. He must read also the *Psalms* over so carefully,

carefully, that he may at least have a general Notion of those Divine Hymns; to which Bishop *Patrick's* Paraphrase will help to carry him.

A *System of Divinity* must be read with exactness. They are almost all alike: When I was young *Wendelin* and *Maresius* were the two shortest and fullest. Here is a vast Errour in the first forming of our *Clergy*, that a Contempt has been cast on that sort of *Books*; and indeed to rise no higher, than to a perpetual reading over different *Systems* is but a mean pitch of Learning; and the swallowing down whole *Systems* by the Lump, has help'd to possess Peoples Minds too early with Prejudices, and to shut them up in too implicate a following of others. But the throwing off all these *Books*, makes that many who have read a great deal, yet have no intire *Body of Divinity* in their Head; they have no Scheme or Method, and so are Ignorant of some very plain things, which could never have happened to them, if they had carefully read and digested a *System* into their Memories. But because this is indeed a very low Form; therefore to lead a man farther, to have a freer view of Divinity, to examine things equally and clearly, and to use his own Reason, by balancing the various Views, that two great Divisions of *Protestants* have, not only in the Points which they controvert, but in a great many others, in which though they agree in the same *Conclusions*, yet they arrive at them by very different *Premises*; I would advise him that studies Divinity, to read two larger Bodies, writ by some Eminent Men of both sides; and because the latest are commonly the best; *Turretin* for the whole *Calvinist Hypothesis*, and *Limburgh* for the *Arminian*, will make a Man fully the Master of all the Notions of both sides. Or if one would see how far middle ways may be taken; The *Theses* of *Saurin*, or *le Blanc's Theses*, will compleat him in that. These Books well read, digested into Abstracts, and frequently reviewed or talked over by two *Companions in Study*, will give a Man an entire view of the whole Body of Divinity.

But by reason of that pest of Atheism, that Spreads so much among us, the Foundations of Religion must be well laid: Bishop *Wilkins* Book of *Natural Religion*, will lead one in the first Steps through the Principles that he has laid together in a plain and  
natural



natural Method. *Grotius* his Book of the *truth of the Christian Religion*, with his *Notes* upon it, ought to be read and almost got by heart. The whole Controvertie both of *Atheism* and *Deism*, the Arguments both for the *Old and New Testament*, are fully opened; with a great variety both of Learning and Reasoning, in Bishop *Stillingfleet's Origines Sacrae*.

There remains only to direct a Student how to form right Notions of Practical Matters; and particularly of Preaching. Dr. *Hammond's Practical Catechism*, is a Book of great use; but not to be begun with, as too many do: It does require a good deal of previous Study, before the force of his Reasonings is apprehended; but when one is ready for it, it is a rare Book, and States the Grounds of Morality, and of our Duty, upon true Principles. To form one to understand the right Method of Preaching, the Extent of it, and the proper ways of Application, Bishop *Sanderfon*, Mr. *Faringdon*, and Dr. *Barrow*, are the best and the fullest Models. There is a vast variety of other Sermons, which may be read with an equal measure of Advantage and Pleasure. And if from the time that one resolves to direct his Studies towards the Church, he would every Lords day read two Sermons of any good Preacher, and turn them a little over in his Thoughts, this would insensibly in two or three years time, carry him very far, and give him a large view of the different ways of Preaching, and furnish him with Materials for handling a great many *Texts of Scripture* when he comes to it.

And thus I have carried my Student through those Studies, that seem to me so necessary for qualifying him to be an able *Minister of the New Testament*, that I cannot see how any Article of this can be well abated. It may seem strange, that in this whole Direction, I have said nothing concerning the Study of the *Fathers* or *Church History*. But I said at first, that a great distinction was to be made between what was necessary to prepare a Man to be a *Priest*, and what was necessary to make him a Compleat and Learned *Divine*.

The knowledge of these things is necessary to the latter, though they do not seem so necessary for the former: There are many things to be left to the Prosecution of a Divine's



Divine's Study, that therefore are not mentioned here, not with any design to disparage that sort of Learning; for I am now only upon that measure of Knowledge, under which I heartily wish that no Man were put in *Priests Orders*; and therefore I have pass'd over many other things, such as the more accurate Understanding of the *Controversies* between us and the *Church of Rome*, and the unhappy Disputes between us and the *Dissenters* of all sorts; though both the one and the other, have of late been opened with that perspicuity, that fulness of Argument, and that clearness as well as fineness of *Style*, that a *Collection* of these may give a Man the fullest Instructions, that is to be found in any Books I know. Others, and perhaps the far greater number, will think that I have clogged this Matter too much. But I desire these may consider how much we do *justly* reckon, that our *Profession* is preferable either to *Law* or *Medicine*. Now, if this is true, it is not unreasonable, that since those who pretend to these, must be at so much Pains, before they enter upon a *Practice* which relates only to Men's *Fortunes*, or their *Persons*, we whose Labours relate to their *Souls* and their *eternal State*, should be at least at some considerable Pains, before we enter upon them. Let any *young Divine* go to the Chambers of a *Student* in the *Inns of Court*, and see how many Books he must read, and how great a Volume of a *Common-Place-Book* he must make, he will there see through how hard a Task one must go, in a course of many Years, and how ready he must be in all the Parts of it, before he is called to the *Barr*, or can manage *Business*. How exact must a *Physician* be in Anatomy, in Simples, in Pharmacy, in the Theory of Diseases, and in the Observations and Counsels of Doctors, before he can either with *Honour*, or a *safe Conscience*, undertake *Practice*? He must be ready with all this, and in that infinite number of *hard Words*, that belong to every part of it, to give his Directions and write his *Bills* by the Patient's Bed-side; who cannot stay till he goes to his *Study* and turns over his Books. If then so long a course of Study, and so much exactness and readiness in it, is necessary to these Professions; nay, if every mechanical Art, even

even the meanest, requires a course of many Years, before one can be a Master in it, shall the noblest and the most important of all others, that which comes from Heaven, and leads thither again: shall that which God has honoured so highly, and to which Laws and Governments have added such Privileges and Encouragements, that is employ'd in the sublimest Exercises, which require a proportioned worth in those who handle them, to maintain their Value and Dignity in the Esteem of the World; shall all this, I say, be esteemed so low a thing in our Eyes, that a much less degree of Time and Study, is necessary to arrive at it, than at the most sordid of all Trades whatsoever? And yet after all, a Man of a tolerable Capacity, with a good degree of Application, may go through all this well, and exactly, in two Years time. I am very sure, by many an Experiment I have made, that this may be done in a much less compass: But because all Men do not go alike quick, have not the same force, nor the same application, therefore I reckon two Years for it; which I do thus divide: One Year before *Deacons Orders*, and another between them and *Priests Orders*. And can this be thought a hard Imposition? Or do not those, who think thus, give great occasion to the *Contempt of the Clergy*, if they give the World cause to observe, that how much soever we may magnifie our Profession, yet by our practice, we shew that we do judge it the meanest of all others, which is to be arrived at upon less previous study and preparation to it, than any other whatsoever? Since I have been hitherto so minute, I will yet divide this matter a little lower into those parts of it, without which, *Deacons Orders* ought not to be given, and those to be reserved to the second Year of study. To have read the *New Testament* well, so as to carry a great deal of it in one's Memory, to have a clear notion of the several Books of it, to understand well the Nature and the Conditions of the *Covenant of Grace*, and to have read one *System* well, so as to be *Master* of it, to understand the whole *Catechetical* matter, to have read *Wilkins* and *Grotius*; this, I say, is that part of this Task, which I propose before one is made *Deacon*. The rest, though much the larger, will go the easier, if those Foundations are once well laid in them. And upon the Article  
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of Studying the Scriptures, I will add one Advice more.

There are two Methods in reading them, the one ought to be merely *Critical*, to find out the meaning and coherence of the several Parts of them, in which one runs easily through the greater Part, and is only obliged to stop at some harder Passages, which may be marked down, and learned Men are to be consulted upon them: Those that are really hard to be explained, are both few, and they relate to Matters that are not so essential to Christianity; and therefore after one has in general seen what is said upon these, he may put off the fuller Consideration of that to more leisure, and better opportunities. But the other way of reading the Scriptures, is to be done merely with a view to Practice, to raise Devotion, to encrease Piety, and to give good Thoughts and severe Rules. In this a Man is to employ himself much. This is a Book always at hand, and the getting a great deal of it by *heart*, is the best part of a Clergy-man's Study; it is the Foundation, and lays in the Materials for all the rest. This alone may furnish a Man with a noble Stock of lively Thoughts, and sublime Expressions; and therefore it must be always reckoned as that, without which all other things amount to nothing; and the chief and main Subject of the Study, the Meditation and the Discourses of a Clergy-man.

## C H A P. VIII.

### *Of the Functions and Labours of Clergy-men.*

I Have in the former Chapter laid down the Model and Method, by which a Clerk is to be formed and prepared; I come now to consider his Course of *Life*, his Publick *Functions*, and his Secret *Labours*. In this as well as in the former, I will study to consider what Mankind can *bear*, rather than what may be offered in a fair Idea, that is far above what we can hope ever to bring the World to. As for a Priest's *Life* and

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Conversation, so much was said in the former Chapter; in which as a preparation to Orders, it was proposed what he ought to be, that I may now be the shorter on this Article.

The *Clergy* have one great advantage, beyond all the rest of the World, in this respect, besides all others, that whereas the particular Callings of other Men, prove to them great Distractions, and lay many Temptations in their way, to divert them from minding their *high and holy Calling* of being *Christians*, it is quite otherwise with the *Clergy*, the more they follow their private *Callings*, they do the more certainly advance their general one: The better *Priests* they are, they become also the better *Christians*: every part of their *Calling*, when well performed, raises good Thoughts, brings good Idea's into their Mind, and tends both to encrease their Knowledge, and quicken their Sense of Divine Matters. A Priest therefore is more accountable to God, and the World for his Deportment, and will be more severely accounted with than any other Person whatsoever. He is more watched over and observed than all others: *Very good men* will be, even to a Censure, jealous of him; *very bad men* will wait for his halting, and Insult upon it; and all sorts of Persons, will be willing to defend themselves against the Authority of his Doctrine and Admonitions; by this *he says but does not*; and though our Saviour charged his Disciples and Followers, *to hear those who sat in Moses his Chair, and to observe and do whatsoever they bid them observe, but not to do after their works, for they said and did not*; the World will reverse this quite, and consider rather how a Clerk *Lives*, than what he *Says*. They see the one, and from it conclude what he himself thinks of the other; and so will believe themselves not a little justified, if they can say that they did no worse, than as they saw their Minister do before them.

Therefore a Priest must not only abstain from gross Scandals, but keep at the furthest distance from them: He must not only not be drunk, but he must not sit a Tipling; nor go to Taverns or Ale-houses, except some urgent occasion requires it, and stay no longer in them, than as that occasion



sion demands it. He must not only abstain from Acts of Lewdness, but from all indecent Behaviour, and unbecoming Raillery. *Gaming* and *Plays*, and every thing of that sort, which is an approach to the Vanities and Disorders of the World, must be avoided by him. And unless the straits of his Condition, or his Necessities force it, he ought to shun all other Cares, such as, not only the farming of Grounds, but even the teaching of Schools, since these must of necessity take him off both from his Labour and Study. Such Diversions as his Health, or the Temper of his Mind, may render proper for him, ought to be Manly, Decent and Grave; and such as may neither possess his Mind or Time too much, nor give a bad Character of him to his People: He must also avoid too much Familiarity with bad People; and the squandering away his time in too much vain and idle Discourse. His cheerfulness ought to be frank, but neither excessive nor licentious: His *Friends* and his *Garden* ought to be his chief Diversions, as his *Study* and his *Parish*, ought to be his chief Employments. He must still carry on his Study, making himself an absolute Master of the few Books he has, till his Circumstances grow larger, that he can purchase more. He can have no pretence, if he were ever so narrow in the World, to say, that he cannot get, not only the *Collets*, but the *Psalms*, and the *New Testament* by heart, or at least a great part of them. If there are any Books belonging to his Church, such as *Jewel's Works*, and the *Book of Martyrs*, which lie tearing in many Places, these he may read over and over again, till he is able to furnish himself better, I mean with a greater variety; but let him furnish himself ever so well, the reading and understanding the *Scriptures*, chiefly the *Psalms* and the *New Testament*, ought to be still his chief Study, till he becomes so conversant in them, that he can both say many Parts of them, and explain them without Book.

It is the only visible Reason of the *Jems* adhering so firmly to their Religion, that during the Ten or Twelve years of their Education, their Youth are so much practised to the Scriptures, to weigh every word in them, and get



them all by heart, that it is an Admiration, to see how ready both Men and Women among them are at it; their *Rabbis* have it to that Perfection, that they have the Concordance of their whole Bible in their Memories, which give them vast Advantages, when they are to argue with any that are not so ready as they are in the Scriptures: Our Task is much shorter and easier, and it is a *Reproach*, especially to us Protestants, who found our Religion merely on the Scriptures, that we know the *New Testament* so little, which cannot be excused.

With the Study of the *Scriptures*, or rather as a part of it comes in the Study of the *Fathers*, as far as one can go; in these their *Apologies*, and *Epistles*, are chiefly to be read; for these give us the best view of those Times: *Basil's* and *Chrysostom's* Sermons, are by much the best. To these Studies, *History* comes in as a noble and pleasant Addition; that gives a Man great views of the Providence of God, of the Nature of Man, and of the Conduct of the World. This is above no Man's Capacity; and though some Histories are better than others; yet any Histories, such as one can get, are to be read, rather than none at all. If one can compass it, he ought to begin with the History of the Church, and there at the Head *Josephus*, and go on with *Eusebius*, *Socrates*, and the other Historians, that are commonly bound together; and then go to other later Collectors of Ancient History; the History of our own Church and Country is to come next; then the Ancient Greek and Roman History, and after that, as much History, Geography, and Books of Travels as can be had, will give an easie and a useful Entertainment, and will furnish one with great variety of good Thoughts, and of pleasant, as well as edifying Discourse. As for all other Studies, every one must follow his Inclinations, his Capacities, and that which he can procure to himself. The Books that we learn at Schools are generally laid aside, with this Prejudice, that they were the *Labours* as well as the *Sorrows* of our *Childhood* and *Education*; but they are among the best of Books. The Greek and Roman Authors have a Spirit in them, a  
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force both of Thought and Expression, that later Ages have not been able to imitate: *Buchanan* only excepted, in whom, more particularly in his *Psalms*, there is a Beauty and Life, an Exactness as well as a Liberty, that cannot be imitated, and scarce enough commended. The Study and Practice of *Physick*, especially that which is safe and simple, puts the Clergy in a capacity of doing great Acts of Charity, and of rendering both their Persons and Labours very acceptable to their People; it will procure their being soon sent for by them in Sickness, and it will give them great advantages in speaking to them, of their Spiritual Concerns; when they are so careful of their Persons, but in this nothing that is *for-did* must mix.

These ought to be the chief Studies of the Clergy. But to give all these their full effect, a Priest that is much in his Study, ought to Employ a great part of his Time in secret and fervent Prayer, for the Direction and Blessing of God in his Labours, for the constant assistance of his Holy Spirit, and for a lively Sense of Divine Matters, that so he may feel the Impressions of them grow deep and strong upon his Thoughts. This, and this only, will make him go on with his *work*, without wearying, and be always rejoicing in it: This will make his Expressions of these things to be Happy and Noble, when he can bring them out of the *good Treasure of his Heart*; that is, ever full, and always warm with them.

From his Study, I go next to his Publick Functions: He must bring his Mind to an inward and feeling Sense of those things that are *prayed* for in our *Offices*: That will make him pronounce them with an equal measure of Gravity and Affection, and with a due Slowness and Emphasis. I do not love the Theatrical way of the Church of *Rome*, in which it is a great Study, and a long Practice, to learn in every one of their *Offices*, how they ought to Compose their Looks, Gesture and Voice; yet a light wandering of the Eyes, and a hasty running through the *Prayers*, are things highly unbecoming; they do very much lessen the Majesty of our *Worship*, and give our Enemies advantage to call it *dead and formal*,

*formal*, when they see plainly, that he who officiates *is dead and formal* in it. A deep Sense of the things prayed for, a true Recollection and Attention of Spirit, and a holy Earnestness of Soul, will give a Composure to the Looks, and a weight to the Pronunciation, that will be tempered between affectation on the one hand, and Levity on the other. As for *Preaching*, I refer that to a Chapter apart.

A Minister ought to Instruct his People frequently, of the nature of *Baptism*, that they may not go about it merely as a Ceremony, as it is too visible the greater part do; but that they may consider it as the Dedicating their Children to God, the Offering them to Christ, and the holding them thereafter as his, directing their chief care about them, to the breeding them up in the *nurture and admonition of the Lord*. There must be Care taken to give them all a right Notion of the use of *God-fathers* and *God-mothers*, which is a good Institution, to procure a *double Security* for the Education of Children; it being to be supposed, that the common Ties of Nature and Religion, bind the *Parents* so strongly, that if they are not mindful of these, a Special Vow would not put a new force in them, and therefore a *Collateral Security* is also demanded, both to supply their Defects, if they are faulty, and to take care of the Religious Education of the Infant, in case the *Parents* should happen to die before that is done; and therefore no *God-father* or *God-mother* are to be invited to that Office, but such with whom one would trust the care of the Education of his Child, nor ought any to do this Office for another, but he that is willing to charge himself, with the *Education of the Child* for whom he answers. But when Ambition or Vanity, Favour or Presents, are the Considerations upon which those *Sureties* in Baptism are chosen; great advantage is hereby given to those who reject *Infant Baptism*, and the Ends of the Church in this Institution are quite defeated; which are both the making the Security that is given for the Children so much the stronger, and the establishing an Endearment and a Tenderness between Families; this being, in its own Nature, no small Tye, how little soever it may be apprehended or understood.

Great care must be taken in the Instruction of the Youth : The bare saying the *Catechism* by Rote is a small Matter ; it is necessary to make them understand the weight of every Word in it : And for this end, every *Priest*, that minds his Duty, will find that no Part of it is so useful to his People, as *once* every year to go through the whole *Church Catechism*, Word by Word, and make his People understand the Importance of every Tittle in it. This will be no hard labour to himself ; for after he has once gathered together the Places of Scripture that relate to every Article, and formed some clear Illustrations, and easie Similies to make it understood ; his *Catechetical Discourses*, during all the rest of his Life, will be only the going over that same Matter again and again ; by this means his People will come to have all this by heart ; they will know what to say upon it at home to their Children ; and they will understand all his Sermons the better, when they have once had a clear Notion of all those Terms that must run through them ; for those not being understood, renders them all unintelligible. A Discourse of this sort would be generally of much greater Edification than an Afternoons Sermon ; it should not be too long ; too much must not be said at a time, nor more than one Point opened ; a Quarter of an Hour is time sufficient ; for it will grow tedious and be too little remembred, if it is half an hour long. This would draw an Assembly to Evening Prayers, which we see are but too much neglected, when there is no sort of Discourse or Sermon accompanying them. And the practising this, during the Six Months of the year, in which the days are long, would be a very effectual means, both to Instruct the People, and to bring them to a more Religious Observation of the Lord's Day ; which is one of the powerfulest Instruments for the carrying on, and advancing of Religion in the World.

With *Catechising*, a Minister is to joyn the preparing those whom he Instructs to be *Confirmed* ; which is not to be done merely upon their being able to say over so many words by Rote. It is their renewing their Baptismal Vow in their own Persons, which the Church designs by that *Office*, and the bearing in their own Minds, a Sense of their being bound immediately



immediately by that, which their Sureties then undertook for them: Now to do this in such a manner, as that it may make Impression, and have a due effect upon them, they must stay, till they themselves understand what they do, and till they have some Sense and Affection to it; and therefore till one is of an Age and Disposition fit to receive the Holy Sacrament of the *Lord's Supper*, and desires to be Confirmed, as a solemn Preparation and Qualification to it; he is not yet ready for it; for in the common Management of that *Holy Rite*, it is but too visible, that of those Multitudes that crowd to it, the far greater Part, come merely as if they were to receive the Bishop's Blessing, without any Sense of the *Vow* made by them, and of their renewing their Baptismal Engagements in it.

As for the greatest and solemnest of all the Institutions of Christ, the Commemorating his Death, and the Partaking of it in the *Lord's Supper*; this must be well explained to the People, to preserve them from the extreams of Superstition and Irreverence; to raise in them a great Sense of the Goodness of God, that appeared in the Death of Christ; of his Love to us, of the Sacrifice he once offered, and of the Intercession which he still continues to make for us: A share in all which is there *Federally* offered to us, upon our coming under Engagements, to answer our Part of the *Covenant*, and to live according to the Rules it sets us: On these things he ought to enlarge himself, not only in his Sermons, but in his *Catechetical Exercises*, and in private Discourses; that so he may give his People right Notions of that Solemn Part of Worship, that he may bring them to delight in it; and may neither fright them from it, by raising their Apprehensions of it to a strictness that may terrifie too much, nor encourage them in the too common Practice of the dead and formal *receiving*, at the great Festivals, as a piece of Decency recommended by Custom.

About the time of the Sacrament, every Minister that knows any one of his Parish guilty of eminent Sins, ought to go and Admonish him to change his Course of Life, or not to profane the *Table of the Lord*; and if private Admonitions have



have no Effect; then if his Sins are Publick and Scandalous, he ought to deny him the Sacrament; and upon that he ought to take the Method which is still left in the Church, to make Sinners *ashamed*, to separate them from *Holy things*, till they have edified the Church as much by their *Repentance*, and the outward Profession of it, as they had formerly scandalized it by their *Disorders*. This we must confess, that though we have great Reason, to lament our want of the *Godly Discipline that was in the Primitive Church*, yet we have still Authority for a great deal *more* than we put in *Practice*. Scandalous Persons ought, and might be more frequently presented than they are, and both Private and Publick Admonitions might be more used than they are. There is a flaueness in all these things among us. Some are willing to do nothing, because they cannot do all that they ought to do; whereas the right way for procuring an enlargement of our *Authority*, is to use that we have *well*; not as an Engine to gratifie our own or other Peoples Passions, not to vex People, nor to look after Fees, more than the Correction of Manners, or the Edification of the People. If we began much with private Applications, and brought none into our Courts, till it was visible that all other ways had been unsuccessful, and that no regard was had either to Persons or Parties, to Men's Opinions or Interests, we might again bring our Courts into the esteem which they ought to have, but which they have almost entirely lost: We can never hope to bring the World to bear the *Yoke of Christ*, and the Order that he has appointed to be kept up in his Church, of *noting those that walk disorderly, of separating our selves from them, of having no fellowship, no, not so much as to eat with them*, as long as we give them cause to apprehend, that we intend by this to bring them under our *Yoke*, to subdue them to us, and to *rule them with a Rod of Iron*: For the truth is, Mankind is so strongly compounded, that it is very hard to restrain *Ecclesiastical Tyranny* on the one hand, without running to a *Lawless Licentiousness* on the other; so strongly does the World love Extreame, and avoid a Temper.

Now I have gone through the Publick Functions of a Priest, and in speaking of the last of these, I have broke in upon the Third Head of his Duty, his *private Labours* in his Parish. He understands little the Nature and the Obligations of the *Priestly Office*, who thinks he has discharged it, by performing the Publick Appointments, in which if he is defective, the Laws of the Church, how feeble soever they may be as to other things, will have their Course; but as the private Duties of the *Pastoral Care*, are things upon which the Cognisance of the Law cannot fall, so they are the most important and necessary of all others; and the more Praise Worthy, the freer they are, and the less forc'd by the Compulsion of Law. As to the Publick Functions, every Man has his Rule; and in these all are almost alike; every Man, especially if his Lungs are good, can read Prayers, even in the largest Congregation; and if he has a right Taste, and can but choose good Sermons, out of the many that are in Print, he may likewise serve them well that way too. But the difference between one Man and another, shews it self more sensibly in his *private Labours*, in his prudent Deportment, in his modest and discreet Way of procuring Respect to himself, in his Treating his *Parish*, either in reconciling such Differences as may happen to be among them, or in Admonishing Men of Rank, who set an ill Example to others, which ought always to be done in that way, which will probably have the best effect upon them; therefore it must be done secretly, and with Expressions of Tenderneß and Respect for their Persons; fit times are to be chosen for this; it may be often the best way to do it by a Letter: For there may be ways fallen upon, of reproving the worst Men, in so soft a manner, that if they are not reclaimed, yet they shall not be irritated or made worse by it, which is but too often the Effect of an indiscreet Reproof. By this a Minister may save the Sinners Soul; he is at least sure to save his own, by having discharged his Duty towards his People.

One of the chief Parts of the *Pastoral Care*, is the *visiting the sick*; not to be done barely when one is sent for: He is to go as soon as he hears that any of his Flock are ill; He is not to  
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satisfie himself with going over the *Office*, or giving them the *Sacrament* when desired: He ought to inform himself of their Course of Life, and of the Temper of their Mind, that so he may apply himself to them accordingly. If they are insensible, he ought to awaken them with the Terrours of God; the Judgment and the Wrath to come. He must endeavour to make them sensible of their Sins; particularly of that which runs through most Men's Lives, their forgetting and neglecting God and his Service, and their setting their Hearts so inordinately upon the World: He must set them on to examine their dealings, and make them seriously to consider, that they can expect no Mercy from God, unless they restore whatsoever they may have got unjustly from any other, by any manner of way, even though their Title were confirmed by Law: He is to lay any other Sins to their charge, that he has reason to suspect them guilty of; and must press them to all such Acts of Repentance as they are then capable of. If they have been Men of a bad Course of Life, he must give them no encouragement to hope much from this *Death-bed Repentance*; yet he is to set them to Implore the *Mercies of God in Christ Jesus*, and to do all they can to obtain his Favour. But unless the Sickness has been of a long continuance, and that the Person's Repentance, his Patience, his Piety has been very extraordinary, during the Course of it, he must be sure to give him no positive ground of *Hope*; but leave him to the *Mercies of God*. For there cannot be any greater Treachery to Souls, that is more fatal and more pernicious, than the giving quick and easie hopes, upon so short, so forced, and so imperfect a Repentance. It not only makes those Persons perish securely themselves, but it leads all about them to destruction; when they see one, of whose *bad Life* and *late Repentance* they have been the Witnesses, put so soon in hopes, nay by some unfaithful Guides, made *sure* of Salvation; this must make them go on very secure in their Sins; when they see how small a measure of *Repentance* sets all right at last: All the Order and Justice of a Nation, would be presently dissolved, should the howlings of *Criminals*, and their Promises of *Amendment*, work on *Juries*, *Judges*, or *Princes*: So the hopes

that are given to *Death-bed Penitents*, must be a most effectual means to root out the Sense of Religion of the Minds of all that see it; and therefore though no dying Man is to be driven to *Despair*, and left to die obstinate in his Sins; yet if we love the Souls of our People, if we set a due value on the Blood of Christ, and if we are touched with any Sense of the Honour or Interests of Religion, we must not say any thing that may encourage others who are but too apt of themselves to put all off to the last Hour. We can give them no hopes from the Nature of the *Gospel Covenant*; yet after all, the best thing a dying Man can do, is to *Repent*; if he recovers, that may be the Seed and Beginning of a new Life and a new Nature in him: Nor do we know the Measure of the *Riches of God's Grace and Mercy*; how far he may think fit to exert it beyond the Conditions and Promises of the *New Covenant*, at least to the lessening of such a Persons Misery in another State. We are sure he is not within the *New Covenant*; and since he has not *repented*, according to the *Tenor* of it, we dare not, unless we betray our Commission, give any hopes beyond it. But one of the chief Cares of a Minister about the Sick, ought to be to exact of them Solemn Vows and Promises, of a Renovation of Life, in case God shall raise them up again; and these ought to be demanded, not only in general Words, but if they have been guilty of any scandalous Disorders, or any other ill Practices, there ought to be special Promises made with Relation to those. And upon the Recovery of such Persons, their Ministers ought to put them in mind of their Engagements, and use all the due freedom of Admonitions and Reproof, upon their breaking loose from them. In such a Case they ought to leave a terrible denunciation of the Judgments of God upon them, and so at least they acquit themselves.

There is another sort of *sick Persons*, who abound more in *Towns* than in the Country; those are the troubled in Mind; of these there are two sorts, some have committed enormous Sins, which kindle a Storm in their Consciences; and that ought to be cherished, till they have compleated a Repentance proportioned to the Nature and Degree of their Sin. If *Wrong*  
has



has been done to another, *Reparation* and *Restitution* must be made to the utmost of the Party's Power. If *Blood* has been shed, a long course of Fasting and Prayer; a total abstinence from *Wine*; if *Drunkenness* gave the rise to it, a making up the loss to the Family, on which it has fallen, must be enjoyed. But alas, the greater part of those that think they are troubled in Mind, are Melancholy Hypochondriacal People, who, what through some false Opinions in Religion, what through a foulness of Blood, occasioned by their unactive Course of Life, in which their Minds work too much, because their Bodies are too little employed, fall under dark and cloudy Apprehensions; of which they can give no clear nor good Account. This, in the greatest Part, is to be removed by strong and *Chalybeate* Medicines; yet such Persons are to be much pitied, and a little humoured in their Distemper. They must be diverted from thinking too much, being too much alone, or dwelling too long on Thoughts that are too hard for them to Master.

The Opinion that has had the chief Influence in raising these Distempers, has been that of *Praying by the Spirit*; when a flame of Thought, a melting in the Brain, and the abounding in tender expressions, have been thought the Effects of the *Spirit*, moving all those Symptoms of a warm Temper. Now in all People, especially in Persons of a Melancholy Disposition, that are much alone, there will be a great diversity, with relation to this at different times: Sometimes these Heats will rise and flow copiously, and at other times there will be a damp upon the Brain, and a dead dryness in the Spirits. This to men that are prepossessed with the Opinion, now set forth will appear as if God did sometimes *shine out*, and at other times *hide his face*; and since this last will be the most frequent in men of that Temper; as they will be apt to be lifted up, when they think they have a *fulness of the Spirit* in them, so they will be as much cast down when that is withdrawn; they will conclude from it, that *God is angry with them*, and so reckon that they must be in a very dangerous Condition: Upon this, a vast variety of troublesom Scruples will arise out of every thing that they either do or have done. If then a Minister has occasion



to treat any in this Condition, he must make them apprehend that the heat or coldness of their Brain, is the effect of *Temper*; and flows from the different State of the *Animal Spirits*, which have their Diseases, their hot and their cold Fits, as well as the Blood has; and therefore no measure can be taken from these, either to Judge for or against themselves. They are to consider what are their Principles and Resolutions, and what's the settled Course of their Life; upon these they are to form sure Judgments, and not upon any thing that is so fluctuating and inconstant as Fits or Humours.

Another part of a Priest's Duty is, with relation to them *that are without*, I mean, that are not of our Body, which are of the side of the *Church of Rome*, or among the *Dissenters*. Other Churches and Bodies are noted for their Zeal, in making *Profelytes*, for their restless Endeavours, as well as their unlawful Methods in it, they reckoning, perhaps, that all will be sanctified by the encreasing their Party, which is the true name of *making Converts*, except they become at the same time *Good Men*, as well as Votaries to a Side or Cause. We are certainly very remiss in this, of both hands, little pains is taken to gain either upon *Papist* or *Nonconformist*; the Law has been so much trusted to; that that method only was thought sure; it was much valued, and others at the same time as much neglected; and whereas at first, without force or violence, in Forty years time *Papery* from being the prevailing Religion, was reduced to a *handful*, we have now in above twice that number of years, made very little Progress. The favour shew'd them from our Court, made us seem, as it were, unwilling to disturb them in their Religion; so that we grow at last to be kind to them, to look on them as harmless and inoffensive Neighbours, and even to cherish and comfort them; we were very near the being convinc'd of our mistake, by a terrible and dear bought *Experience*. Now they are again under Hatches; certainly it becomes us, both in Charity to them, and in regard to our own Safety, to study to gain them by the force of Reason and Persuasion; by shewing all kindness to them, and thereby disposing them to hearken to the Reasons that we may lay before them. We ought not to give over this as desperate upon a few unsuccessful

cessful Attempts, but must follow them in the *meekness of Christ*, that so we may at last prove happy Instruments, in delivering them from the Blindness and Captivity they are kept under, and the Idolatry and Superstition they live in: We ought to visit them often in a Spirit of Love and Charity, and to offer them Conferences; and upon such Endeavours, we have reason to expect a Blessing, at least this, of having done our Duty, and so delivering our own Souls.

Nor are we to think, that the *Toleration*, under which the Law has settled the *Dissenters*, does either absolve them from the Obligations that they lay under before, by the Laws of God and the Gospel, to maintain the *Unity of the Church*, and not to rent it by unjust or causeless Schisms, or us from using our endeavours to bring them to it, by the methods of Perswasion and Kindness: Nay, perhaps, their being now in Circumstances, that they can no more be *forced* in these things, may put some of them in a greater towardness to hear Reason; a Free Nation naturally hating Constraint: And certainly the less we seem to grudge or envy them their *Liberty*, we will be thereby the nearer gaining on the generouser and better Part of them, and the rest would soon lose Heart, and look out of Countenance; if these should hearken to us. It was the Opinion many had of their *strictness*, and of the *looseness* that was amongst us, that gained them their Credit, and made such numbers fall off from us. They have in a great measure lost the *Good Character* that once they had; if to that we should likewise lose our *bad one*; if we were stricter in our Lives, more serious and constant in our Labours; and studied more effectually to Reform those of our Communion, than to rail at theirs; If we took occasion to let them see that we love them, that we wish them no harm, but good, then we might hope, by the Blessing of God, to lay the Obligations to Love and Peace, to Unity and Concord before them, with such Advantages, that some of them might open their Eyes, and see at last upon how slight Grounds, they have now so long kept up such a Wrangling, and made such a Rent in the Church, that both the *Power of Religion* in general, and the strength of the *Protestant Religion*, have suffered extremely by them.

Thus

Thus far I have carried a *Clerk* through his Parish, and all the several Branches of his Duty to his People. But that all this may be well-gone about, and indeed as the Foundation upon which all the other Parts of the Pastoral Care may be well managed, he ought frequently to visit his whole Parish *from House to House*; that so he may know them, and be known of them. This I know will seem a vast Labour, especially in *Towns*, where Parishes are large; but that is no excuse for those in the Country, where they are generally small; and if they are larger, the going this Round will be the longer a doing; yet an hour a day, Twice or Thrice a Week, is no hard Duty; and this in the Compass of a Year will go a great way, even in a large *Parish*. In these Visits, much Time is not to be spent; a short Word for stirring them up to mind their Souls, to make Conscience of their Ways, and to pray earnestly to God, may begin it, and almost end it. After one has asked in what Union and Peace the Neighbourhood lives, and enquired into their Necessities, if they seem very Poor, that so those to whom that Care belongs, may be put in mind to see how they may be relieved. In this course of visiting, a Minister will soon find out, if there are any truly *Good Persons* in his *Parish*, after whom he must look with a more particular regard. Since these are the *Excellent ones*, in whom all his delight ought to be. For let their Rank be ever so mean, if they are sincerely Religious, and not Hypocritical Pretenders to it, who are vainly puffed up with some Degrees of Knowledge, and other outward Appearances, he ought to consider them as the most valuable in the sight of God; and indeed, as the chief Part of his Care; for a *living Dog is better than a dead Lion*. I know this way of Parochial Visitation; is so worn out, that, perhaps, neither Priest nor People, will be very desirous to see it taken up. It will put the one to Labour and Trouble, and bring the other under a closer Inspection, which bad Men will no ways desire, nor perhaps endure. But if this were put on the *Clergy* by their *Bishops*, and if they explained in a Sermon before they began it, the Reasons and Ends of doing it; that

that would remove the Prejudices which might arise against it. I confess this is an encrease of Labour, but that will seem no hard matter to such as have a right Sense of their *Ordination-Vows*, of the value of *Souls*, and of the Dignity of their *Function*. If Men had the *Spirit of their Calling* in them, and a due measure of Flame and Heat in carrying it on; *Labour* in it would be rather a Pleasure than a Trouble. In all other Professions, those who follow them, labour in them all the Year long, and are hard at their Business every Day of the Week. All Men that are well suited in a Profession, that is agreeable to their Genius and Inclination, are really the easier and the better pleased, the more they are employed in it. Indeed there is no Trade nor Course of Life, except *Ours*, that does not take up the whole Man: And shall *Ours* only, that is the Noblest of all others, and that has a certain Subsistence fixed upon it, and does not live by *Contingencies*, and upon *Hopes*, as all others do, make the labouring in our Business, an Objection against any part of our *Duty*? Certainly nothing can so much dispose the Nation, to think on the relieving the Necessities of the many small Livings, as the seeing the Clergy setting about their Business to purpose; this would, by the Blessing of God, be a most effectual Means, of stopping the Progress of *Atheism*, and of the *Contempt* that the Clergy lies under; it would go a great way towards the healing our Schism, and would be the chief step that could possibly be made, towards the procuring to us such Laws as are yet wanting to the compleating our Reformation, and the mending the Condition of so many of our poor Brethren, who are languishing in Want, and under great Straits.

There remains only somewhat to be added concerning the Behaviour of the *Clergie* towards one another. Those of a higher Form in Learning, Dignity and Wealth, ought not to despise poor *Vicars* and *Curates*; but on the contrary, the poorer they are, they ought to pity and encourage them the more, since they are all of the same *Order*, only the one are more happily placed than the others: They ought therefore to cherish those that are in worse Circumstances, and encourage them to come often to them; they ought to lend them Books, and to give them other



Assistances in order to their progress in Learning. 'Tis a bad thing to see a *Bishop* behave himself superciliously towards any of his *Clergy*, but it is intolerable in those of the *same Degree*. The *Clergy* ought to contrive Ways to meet often together, to enter into a brotherly Correspondence, and into the Concerns one of another, both in order to their progress in Knowledge, and for consulting together in all their Affairs. This would be a means to cement them into one Body: hereby they might understand what were amiss in the Conduct of any in their Division, and try to correct it either by private Advices and Endeavours, or by laying it before the *Bishop*, by whose private *Labours*, if his *Clergy* would be assisting to him, and give him free and full Informations of things, many Disorders might be cured, without rising to a publick Scandal, or forcing him to extream Censures. It is a false Pity in any of the *Clergy*, who see their Brethren running into ill Courses, to look on and say nothing: it is a Cruelty to the Church, and may prove a Cruelty to the Person of whom they are so unseasonably tender: for things may be more easily corrected at first, before they have grown to be publick, or are hardened by Habit and Custom. Upon all these Accounts it is of great advantage, and may be Matter of great Edification to the *Clergie*, to enter into a strict Union together, to meet often, and to be helpful to one another: but if this should be made practicable, they must be extreamly strict in those *Meetings*, to observe so exact a *Sobriety*, that there might be no Colour given to censure them, as if these were *merry Meetings*, in which they allowed themselves great Liberties: it were good, if they could be brought to meet to *fast and pray*; but if that is a strain too high for the present Age, at least they must keep so far within bounds, that there may be no room for Calumny. For a Disorder upon any such Occasion, would give a Wound of an extraordinary Nature to the Reputation of the whole *Clergy*, when every one would bear a Share of the Blame, which perhaps belonged but to a few. Four or five such Meetings in a Summer, would neither be a great Charge, nor give much Trouble: but the Advantages that might arise out of them, would be very sensible.

I have but one other Advice to add, but it is of a thing of great consequence, though generally managed in so loose and so indifferent a Manner, that I have some reason in Charity to believe,



lieve, that the *Clergy* make very little Reflection on what they do in it: And that is, in the Testimonials that they sign in *favour* of those that come to be *Ordained*. Many have confessed to my self, that they had signed these upon general Reports, and Importunity; tho the Testimonial bears personal Knowledg. These are instead of the *Suffrages* of the Clergy, which in the Primitive Church were given before any were *Ordained*. A Bishop must depend upon them; for he has no other way to be certainly informed: and therefore as it is a Lie, pass'd with the Solemnity of *Hand and Seal*, to affirm any thing that is beyond one's own Knowledg, so it is a *Lie* made to *God* and the *Church*; since the design of it is to procure *Orders*. So that if a Bishop trusting to *that*, and being satisfied of the Knowledg of one that brings it, ordains an unfit and unworthy Man, they that signed it, are deeply and chiefly involved in the Guilt of his laying Hands suddenly upon him: therefore every Priest ought to charge his Conscience in a deep particular Manner, that so he may never testify for any one, unless he knows his Life to be so regular, and believes his Temper to be so good, that he does really judg him a Person fit to be put in Holy Orders. These are all the Rules that do occur to me at present.

In performing these several Branches of the Duty of a Pastor, the trouble will not be great, if he is truly a good Man, and delights in the Service of God, and in doing Acts of Charity: the Pleasure will be unspeakable; first, that of the Conscience in this Testimony that it gives, and the Quiet and Joy which arises from the Sense of one's having done his Duty: and then it can scarce be supposed but by all this, some will be wrought on; some Sinners will be reclaimed; bad Men will grow good, and good Men will grow better. And if a generous Man feels to a great degree, the Pleasure of having delivered one from Misery, and of making him easy and happy; how sovereign a Joy must it be to a Man that believes there is another Life, to see that he has been an Instrument to rescue some from endless Misery, and to further others in the way to everlasting Happiness? and the more Instances he sees of this, the more do his Joys grow upon him. This makes Life happy, and Death joyful to such a Priest, for he is not terrified with those

words, *Give an Account of thy Stewardship, for thou mayest be no longer Steward*: He knows his Reward shall be full, pressed down, and running over. He is but too happy in those *Spiritual Children*, whom he has *begot in Christ*, he looks after those as the chief part of his Care, and as the principal of his *Flock*, and is so far from aspiring, that it is not without some Uneasiness that he leaves them, if he is commanded to arise to some higher Post in the Church.

The Troubles of this Life, the Censures of bad Men, and even the prospect of a Persecution, are no dreadful Things to him that has this *Seal of his Ministry*; and this Comfort within him, that he has not *laboured in vain*, nor *run and fought as one that beats the Air*; he sees the *Travel of his Soul*, and is satisfied when he finds that *God's Work prospers in his hand*. This comforts him in his sad Reflections on his own past Sins, that he has been an Instrument of advancing God's Honour, of saving Souls, and of propagating his Gospel: Since to have saved one Soul, is worth a Man's coming into the World, and richly worth the Labours of his whole Life. Here is a Subject that might be easily prosecuted by many warm and lively Figures: But I now go on to the last Article relating to this Matter.

## C H A P. IX.

*Concerning Preaching.*

THE World naturally runs to Extreams in every thing. If one Sect or Body of Men magnify Preaching too much, another carries that to another Extream of decrying it as much. It is certainly a noble and a profitable Exercise, if rightly gone about, of great use both to Priest and People; by obliging the one to much Study and Labour, and by setting before the other full and copious Discoveries of Divine Matters, opening them clearly, and pressing them weightily upon them. It has also now gained so much Esteem in the World, that a Clergy-man cannot maintain his Credit, nor bring his People to a constant Attendance on the Worship of God, unless he is happy in these Performances.

I will not run out into the *History of Preaching*, to shew how late it was before it was brought into the Church, and by what steps it grew up to the pitch it is now at: How long it was before the Roman Church used it, and in how many different shapes it has appeared. Some of the first Patterns we have, are the best: for as Tully began the *Roman Eloquence*, and likewise ended it, no Man being able to hold up to the pitch to which he raised it; so St. Basil and St. Chrysostom brought Preaching from the dry pursuing of *Allegories* that had vitiated Origen, and from the excessive Affectation of Figures and Rhetorick that appears in Nazianzen, to a due Simplicity; a native Force and Beauty, having joined to the Plainness of a clear but noble Stile, the Strength of Reason, and the Softness of Persuasion. Some were disgusted at this Plainness; and they brought in a great deal of Art into the Composition of Sermons: Mystical Applications of Scripture grew to be better liked than clear Texts; an Accumulation of Figures, a Cadence in the Periods, a playing upon the Sounds of Words, a Loftiness of Epithets, and often an Obscurity of Expression, were according to the different Tastes of the several

several Ages run into. Preaching has past through many different Forms among us, since the Reformation. But without flattering the present Age, or any Persons now alive, too much, it must be confessed, that it is brought of late to a much greater Perfection, than it was ever before at among us. It is certainly brought nearer the Pattern that *S. Chrysostom* has set, or perhaps carried beyond it. Our Language is much refined, and we have returned to the plain Notions of simple and genuine Rhetorick.

We have so vast a number of excellent Performances in Print, that if a Man has but a right understanding of Religion, and a true relish of good Sense, he may easily furnish himself this way. The impertinent Way of dividing Texts is laid aside, the needless setting out of the Originals, and the vulgar Version, is worn out. The trifling Shews of Learning in many Quotations of Passages, that very few could understand, do no more flat the Auditory. *Pert Wit* and *luscious Eloquence* have lost their relish. So that Sermons are reduced to the plain opening the Meaning of the Text, in a few short Illustrations of its Coherence with what goes before and after, and of the Parts of which it is composed; to that is joined the clear stating of such Propositions as arise out of it, in their Nature, Truth and Reasonableness: by which, the Hearers may form clear Notions of the several Parts of Religion; such as are best suited to their Capacities and Apprehensions: to all which Applications are added, tending to the Reproving, Directing, Encouraging, or Comforting the Hearers, according to the several Occasions that are offered.

This is indeed all that can truly be intended in Preaching, to make some Portions of Scripture to be rightly understood; to make those Truths contain'd in them, to be more fully apprehended; and then to lay the Matter home to the Consciences of the Hearers, so directing all to some good and practical end. In the choice of the *Text*, care is to be taken not to chuse *Texts* that seem to have Humour in them; or that must be long wrought upon, before they are understood. The plainer a Text is in it self, the sooner it is cleared, and the fuller it is of Matter of Instruction; and therefore such ought to be chosen to common Auditories. Many will remember the *Text*, that remember nothing else; therefore such a choice should be made, as may at least

least put a weighty and speaking Sentence of the Scriptures upon the Memories of the People. A Sermon should be made for a *Text*, and not a *Text* found out for a *Sermon*; for to give our Discourses weight, it should appear that we are led to them by our *Texts*: such Sermons will probably have much more Efficacy than a general Discourse, before which a *Text* seems only to be read as a decent Introduction, but to which no regard is had in the Progress of it. Great Care should be also had both in opening the *Text*, and of that which arises from it to illustrate them, by concurrent Passages of Scripture: a little of this ought to be in every Sermon, and but a little: for the People are not to be overcharged with too much of it at a time; and this ought to be done with judgment, and not made a bare *Concordance-Exercise*, of citing Scriptures, that have the same Words, though not to the same purpose and in the same sense. A *Text* being opened, then the Point upon which the Sermon is to run is to be opened; and it will be the better heard and understood, if there is but one Point in a Sermon; so that one Head, and only one, is well stated, and fully set out. In this, great regard is to be had to the Nature of the Auditory, that so the Point explained may be in some measure proportioned to them. Too close a Thread of Reason, too great an Abstraction of Thought, too sublime and too metaphysical a Strain, are suitable to very few Auditories, if to any at all.

Things must be put in a clear Light, and brought out in as short Periods, and in as plain Words as may be: The Reasons of them must be made as sensible to the People as is possible; as in Vertues and Vices; their Tendencies and Effects; their being suitable or unsuitable to our Powers, to both Souls and Bodies, to the Interests of this Life as well as the next; and the Good or Evil that they do to Humane Societies, Families and Neighbourhoods, ought to be fully and frequently opened. In setting these forth, such a Measure is to be kept, that the Hearers may perceive, that things are not strained in the Way of a Declamation, into forced Characters, but that they are set out, as truly they are, without making them seem better by imaginary Perfections, or worse by an undue Aggravation. For the carrying those Matters beyond the plain Observation of Mankind, makes that the Whole is looked on as a piece of Rhetorick; the Preacher seeming to intend



tend rather to shew his Skill, in raising his Subject too high, or running it down too low, than to lay before them the native Consequences of things; and that which upon Reflection they may be all able to perceive is really true. *Virtue* is so good in it self, that it needs no false Paint to make it look better: and *Vice* is so bad, that it can never look so ugly, as when shewed in its own natural Colours. So that an undue *Sublime* in such Descriptions, does hurt, and can do no good.

When the Explanatory Part of the Sermon is over, the Application comes next: and here great Judgment must be used, to make it fall the heaviest, and lie the longest, upon such Particulars as may be within the compass of the Auditory: Directions concerning a high Devotion, to a stupid ignorant Company; or of Generosity and Bounty, to very poor People; against Pride and Ambition, to such as are dull and low minded, are ill suited; and so must have little effect upon them. Therefore care must be taken that the Application be useful and proper; that it make the Hearers apprehend some of their Sins and Defects, and see how to perform their Duty; that it awaken them to it, and direct them in it: and therefore the most common Sins, such as Mens neglecting their Duty to God, in the several Branches of it; their setting their Hearts inordinately upon the World; their Lying in Discourse, but chiefly in Bargaining; their evil Speaking, and their Hatred and Malice, ought to be very often brought in. Some one or other of these, ought to be in every Application that is made, by which they may see that the whole design of Religion lies against them. Such particular Sins, Swearing, Drunkenness, or Leudness as abound in any place, must likewise be frequently brought in here. The Application must be clear and short, very weighty, and free of every thing that looks like the Affectations of Wit and Eloquence; here the Preacher must be all Heart and Soul, designing the good of his People. The whole Sermon is directed to this: therefore as it is fit that the chief Point which a Sermon drives at, should come often over and over, that so the Hearers may never lose sight of it, but keep it still in view; so in the Application, the Text must be shewed to speak it; all the Parts of the Explanation must come in, to enforce it: the Application must be opened in the several Views that it may have, but those  
must

must be chiefly insisted on that are most suitable both to the Capacities and the Circumstances of the People. And in conclusion, all ought to be summed up in a weighty Period or two; and some other signal Passage of the Scriptures relating to it may be sought for, that so the Matter may be left upon the Auditory in the solemnest manner possible.

Thus I have led a Preacher through the Composition of his Sermon; I will next lay before him some Particulars relating to it. The shorter Sermons are, they are generally both better heard, and better remembred. The custom of an Hour's length, forces many Preachers to trifle away much of the Time, and to spin out their Matter, so as to hold out. So great a length does also flat the Hearers, and tempt them to sleep; especially when, as is usual, the first part of the Sermon is languid and heavy: In half an Hour a Man may lay open his Matter in its full extent, and cut off those Superfluities which come in only to lengthen the Discourse: and he may hope to keep up the Attention of his People all the while. As to the *Stile*, Sermons ought to be very plain; the Figures must be easy, not mean, but noble, and brought in upon design to make the Matter better understood. The Words in a Sermon must be simple, and in common use; not favouring of the Schools, nor above the understanding of the People. All long *Periods*, such as carry two or three different Thoughts in them, must be avoided; for few Hearers can follow or apprehend these: Niceties of *Stile* are lost before a common Auditory. But if an easy Simplicity of *Stile* should run through the whole Composition, it should take place most of all in the explanatory part; for the thing being there offered to be understood, it should be stript of all garnishing: *Definitions* should not be offered in the Terms, or Method, that *Logick* directs. In short, a *Preacher* is to fancy himself, as in the room of the most unlearned Man in his whole Parish; and therefore he must put such parts of his Discourse as he would have all understand, in so plain a form of Words, that it may not be beyond the meanest of them: This he will certainly study to do, if his desire is to edify them, rather than to make them admire himself as a learned and high-spoken Man.

But in the Applicatory part, if he has a true taste of Eloquence, and is a Master at it, he is to employ it all in giving sometimes such

tender Touches, as may soften ; and deeper Gashes, such as may awaken his Hearers. A vain Eloquence here, is very ill plac'd ; for if that can be born any where, it is in illustrating the Matter : but all must be grave, where one would persuade : the most natural but the most sensible Expressions come in best here. Such an Eloquence as makes the Hearers look grave, and as it were out of Countenance, is the properest. That which makes them look lively, and as it were smile upon one another, may be pretty, but it only tickles the Imagination, and pleases the Ear ; whereas that which goes to the Heart, and wounds it, makes the Hearer rather look down, and turns his Thoughts inward upon himself : For it is certain that a Sermon, the Conclusion whereof makes the Auditory look pleased, and sets them all a talking one with another, was either not right spoken, or not right heard ; it has been fine, and has probably delighted the Congregation, rather than edified it. But that Sermon that makes every one go away silent and grave, and hastning to be alone, to meditate or pray over the matter of it in secret, has had its true effect.

He that has a Taste and Genius for Eloquence, must improve it by reading *Quintilian*, and *Tully's* Books of *Oratory* ; and by observing the Spirit and Method of *Tully's* Orations : or if he can enter into *Demosthenes*, there he will see a much better Pattern, there being a simplicity, a shortness, and a swiftness, and rapidity in him, that could not be heard without putting his Auditors into a great Commotion. All our Modern Books upon those Subjects, are so far short of those great Originals, that they can bear no Comparison : yet *F. Rapin's* little Book of *Eloquence* is by much the best, only he is too short. *Tully* has so fully opened all the Topicks of *Invention*, that a Man who has read him, will, if he has any Invention of his own, and if he knows thoroughly his Matter, rather have too much than too little in his view, upon every Subject that he treats. This is a Noble Study, and of great use to such as have Judgment to manage it ; for Artificial Eloquence, without a Flame within, is like Artificial Poetry ; all its Productions are forced and unnatural, and in a great measure ridiculous. Art helps and guides Nature ; but if one was not born with this *Flame*, Art will only spoil him, make him luscious and redundant. To such Persons, and indeed to all that are not *Ma-*  
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*fiers* of the *Body of Divinity*, and of the *Scriptures*, I should much rather recommend the using other Mens Sermons, than the making any of their own. But in the choice of these, great Judgment must be used; one must not take an Author that is too much above himself, for by that, compared with his Ordinary Conversation, it will but too evidently appear, that he cannot be the Author of his own Sermons; and that will make both him and them lose too much of their weight. He ought also to put those printed Sermons out of that strength and closeness of Stile, which looks very well in print; but is too stiff, especially for a common Auditory. He may reverse the Method a little, and shorten the Explanations, that so he may retain all that is practical; and that a Man may form himself to Preaching, he ought to take some of the best Models, and try what he can do upon a Text handled by them, without reading them, and then compare his Work with theirs; this will more sensibly, and without putting him to the Blush, model him to imitate, or if he can, to excel the best Patterns: and by this Method, if he will restrain himself for some time, and follow it close, he may come to be able to go without such Crutches, and to work without Patterns: till then, I should advise all to make use of other Mens Sermons, rather than to make any of their own.

The Nation has got into so good a Taste of *Sermons*, from the vast number of those excellent ones that are in print, that a mean Composition will be very ill heard; and therefore it is an unreasonable piece of Vanity, for any to offer their own Crudities, till they have well digested and ripened them. I wish the Majesty of the *Pulpit* were more looked to; and that no Sermons were offered from thence, but such as should make the Hearers both the better, and the wiser, the more knowing, and the more serious.

In the Delivering of *Sermons*, a great Composure of Gesture and Behaviour is necessary, to give them Weight and Authority: Extreames are bad here, as in every thing else; some affect a light and flippant Behaviour; and others think that wry Faces and a tone in the Voice will set off the Matter. Grave and composed Looks, and a natural, but distinct Pronunciation, will always have the best Effects. The great Rule which the Masters of Rhetorick press much, can never be enough remembered; that to make a Man



Speak well, and pronounce with a right *Emphasis*, he ought thoroughly to understand all that he says, be fully persuaded of it, and bring himself to have those Affections, which he desires to infuse into others. He that is inwardly persuaded of the Truth of what he says, and that has a Concern about it in his Mind, will pronounce with a natural Vehemence, that is far more lively, than all the Strains that Art can lead him to. An *Orator*, if we hearken to *them*, must be an honest Man, and speak always on the side of *Truth*, and study to *feel* all that he says; and then he will speak it so as to make others *feel* it likewise. And therefore such as read their *Sermons*, ought to practise Reading much in private, and read aloud, that so their own Ear and Sense may guide them, to know where to raise or quicken, soften or sweeten their Voice, and when to give an Articulation of Authority, or of Conviction; where to pause, and where to languish. We plainly see by the *Stage*, what a Force there is in Pronunciation: the best Compositions are murdered, if ill spoken; and the worst are acceptable, when *well said*. In *Tragedies* rightly pronounced and acted, though we know that all is Fable and Fiction; the tender Parts do so melt the Company, that Tears cannot be stop'd, even by those who laugh at themselves for it. This shews the power of apt Words, and a just Pronunciation. But because this depends in a great measure, upon the present Temper of him that speaks, and the lively Disposition in which he is, therefore he ought by much previous Seriousness, and by earnest Prayer to God, to endeavour to raise his Mind to as warm a sense of the Things he is to speak of, as possibly he can, that so his *Sermons* may make deep Impressions on his Hearers.

This leads me to consider the Difference that is between the Reading and the Speaking of *Sermons*. *Reading* is peculiar to this Nation, and is endured in no other. It has indeed made that our *Sermons* are more exact, and so it has produced to us many Volumes of the best that are extant; but after all, though some few read so happily, pronounce so truly, and enter so entirely into those Affections which they recommend, that in them we see both the Correctness of *Reading*, and the Seriousness of *Speaking* *Sermons*, yet every one is not so happy: some by hanging their Heads perpetually over their Notes, by blundering as they read, and by a cursory running over them, do so lessen the Matter of  
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their *Sermons*, that as they are generally read with very little *Life* or *Affection*, so they are heard with as little regard or esteem. Those who read, ought certainly to be at a little more pains, than for most part they are, to read true, to pronounce with an *Emphasis*, and to raise their Heads, and to direct their Eyes to their Hearers: and if they practis'd more alone the just way of Reading, they might deliver their *Sermons* with much more advantage. Man is a low sort of Creature; he does not, nay nor the greater part cannot consider things in themselves, without those little Seasonings that must recommend them to their Affections. That a Discourse be heard with any *Life*, it must be spoken with *sense*; and the Looks and Motions of the Eye do carry in them such Additions to what is said, that where these do not at all concur, it has not all the Force upon them, that otherwise it might have: besides, that the People, who are too apt to censure the Clergy, are easily carried into an obvious Reflection on *Reading*, that it is an Effect of Laziness.

In pronouncing *Sermons*, there are two Ways; the one is when a whole Discourse is got by heart, and delivered word for word, as it was writ down: this is so vast a Labour, that it is scarce possible that a Man can be able to hold up long to it: Yet there is an Advantage even in this to Beginners; it fills their Memories with good Thoughts, and regular Meditations: and when they have got some of the most important of their *Sermons* by heart in so exact a manner, they are thereby furnished with Topicks for Discourse. And therefore there are at least two different Subjects, on which I wish all Preachers would be at the pains, to form *Sermons* well in their Memories: the one is the Grounds of the *Covenant of Grace*, of both sides, God's offers to us in Christ, and the Conditions that he has required of us, in order to our Reconciliation with him. This is so important a Point, in the whole course of our Ministry, that no Man ought to be to seek in the opening or explaining it: and therefore that he may be ripe in it, he ought to have it all rightly laid in his Memory, not only as to the Notions of it, but to have such a lively Description and Illustration of it all, as to be able to speak of it sensibly, fully, and easily upon all Occasions. Another Subject in which every Minister ought also to be well furnished, is concerning *Death* and *Judgment*; that

that so when he visits the Sick, and, as is common, that the Neighbours come in, he may be able to make a grave Exhortation, in weighty and fit Words, upon those Heads. Less than this, I think no Priest ought to have in his Memory. But indeed, the more *Sermons* a young Beginner gets by heart, he has still thereby the more Discourse ready upon those Heads; for though the whole Contexture of the Sermon will stick no longer than as he has occasion for it, yet a great deal will stay with him: the Idea of the Whole, with the most important Parts of it, will remain much longer.

But now I come to propose another Method of Preaching, by which a Priest may be prepared, after a right View of his Matter, a true Understanding his Text, and a Digesting of his Thoughts upon it into their natural and proper Order, to deliver these both more easily to himself, and with a better Effect both upon Himself and his Hearers. To come at this, he must be for some Years at a great deal of pains to prepare himself to it: yet when that is over, the Labour of all the rest of his Life, as to those Performances, will become very easy and very pleasant to him. The Preparations to this must be these; First he must read the Scriptures very exactly, he must have great Portions of them by heart; and he must also in reading them, make a short Concordance of them in his Memory; that is, he must lay together such Passages as belong to the same Matter; to consider how far they agree or help to illustrate one another, and how the same thing is differently expressed in them; and what various Ideas or Ways of recommending a thing rise out of this Concordance. Upon this a Man must exercise himself much, draw Notes of it, and digest it well in his Thoughts. Then he must be ready with the whole body of Divinity in his Head; he must know what Parts come in as Objections to be answered, where Difficulties lie, how one Part coheres with another, and gives it Light. He must have this very current in his Memory, that he may have things lie before him in one full view; and upon this, he is also to work, by making *Tables*, or using such other Helps as may lay Matters clearly before him. He is more particularly to lay before him, a System of Morality, of all Virtues and Vices, and of all the Duties that arise out of the several Relations of Mankind; that he may have this Matter very full in his eye, and know what are the Scriptures that belong

to all the Parts of it : he is also to make a Collection of all such Thoughts, as he finds either in the Books of the Ancient Philosophers, (where *Seneca* will be of great use to him) or of Christian Authors : he is to separate such Thoughts as are forced, and that do become rather a strained Declamation made only to please, than a solid Discourse designed to persuade. All these he must gather, or at least such a number of them, as may help him to form a distinct Notion of that Matter, so as to be able both to open it clearly, and to press it with Affection and Vehemence.

These are the Materials that must be laid together, the Practice in using them comes next. He that then would prepare himself to be a Preacher in this Method, must accustom himself to talk freely to himself, to let his Thoughts flow from him, especially when he feels an edg and heat upon his Mind ; for then happy Expressions will come in his Mouth, things will ventilate and open themselves to him, as he talks them thus in a Soliloquy to himself. He must also be writing many Essays upon all sorts of Subjects ; for by writing he will bring himself to a correctness both in thinking and in speaking : and thus by a hard practice for two or three Years, a Man may render himself such a *Master* in this *Matter*, that he can never be surprised, nor will new Thoughts ever dry up upon him. He must talk over to himself the whole Body of Divinity, and accustom himself to explain, and prove, to clear Objections, and to apply every part of it to some practical use. He must go through Human Life, in all the Ranks and Degrees of it, and talk over all the Duties of these ; consider the Advantages or Disadvantages in every one of them, their Relation to one another, the Morality of Actions, the common Vertues and Vices of Mankind ; more particularly the Duties of Christians, their Obligations to Meekness and Humility, to forgive Injuries, to relieve the Poor, to bear the Cross, to be patient and contented in every State of Life, to pray much and fervently, to rejoice ever in God, and to be always praising him, and most particularly to be applying seriously to God through Jesus Christ, for Mercy and Pardon, and for his Grace and Spirit ; to be worshipping him devoutly in publick, and to be delighting frequently to commemorate the Death of Christ, and to partake of the Benefits of it. All these, I say,

May; he must talk over and over again to himself; he must study to give his Thoughts all the Heat and Flight about them that he can: and if in these his Meditations, happy Thoughts, and noble and tender Expressions, do at any time offer themselves, he must not lose them, but write them down; and in his pronouncing over such Discourses to himself, he must observe what Words sound harsh, and agree ill together: for there is a Musick in Speaking, as well as in Singing; which a Man, tho not otherwise critical in Sounds, will soon discover. By a very few Years practice of two or three of such Soliloquies a Day, chiefly in the Morning when the Head is clearest, and the Spirits are liveliest, a Man will contract a great easiness both in thinking and speaking.

But the Rule I have reserved last, is the most necessary of all, and without it all the rest will never do the Business; it is this, That a Man must have in himself a deep sense of the Truth and Power of Religion; he must have a Life and Flame in his Thoughts, with relation to those Subjects: He must have felt in himself those things which he intends to explain and recommend to others. He must observe narrowly the motions of his own Mind, the good and bad Effects that the several sorts of Objects he has before him, and Affections he feels within him, have upon him; that so he may have a lively Heat in himself, when he speaks of them; and that he may speak in so sensible a manner, that it may be almost felt that he speaks from his Heart. There is an Authority in the simplest Things that can be said, when they carry visible Characters of Genuineness in them. Now if a Man can carry on this Method, and by much Meditation and Prayer draw down Divine Influences, which are always to be expected, when a Man puts himself in the way of them, and prepares himself for them; he will often feel, that *while he is musing, a Fire is kindled within him*, and then he will *speak with Authority*, and without Constraint; his Thoughts will be true, and his Expressions free and easy: Sometimes this Fire will carry him, as it were, out of himself; and yet without any thing that is Frantick or Enthusiastical. Discourses brought forth with a lively Spirit and Heat, where a composed Gesture, and the proper Motions of the Eye and Countenance, and the due Modu-



Modulations of the Voice concur, will have all the effect that can be expected from any thing that is below immediate Inspiration: and as this will be of use to the Hearers, so it will be of vast use to the Preacher himself, to oblige him to keep his Heart always in good Tune and Temper; not to suffer irregular or forbidden Appetites, Passions, or Projects to possess his Mind: these will both divert him from going on in the course of Meditation, in which a Man must continue many Years, till all his Thoughts are put in order, polish'd and fixed; they will make him likewise speak much against the grain, with an Aversion that will be very sensible to himself, if not to his Hearers: If he has Guilt upon him, if his Conscience is reproaching him, and if any ill Practices are putting a damp upon that good sense of Things, that makes his Thoughts *sparkle*, upon other occasions, and gives him an Air and Authority, a Tone of Assurance, and a Freedom of Expression.

Such a Method as I have been opening, has had great Success with all those that I have known to have tried it. And tho every one has not that swiftness of Imagination, nor that clearness of Expression, that others may have, so that in this Men may differ as much as they do in their written Compositions; yet every Man by this Method may rise far above that which he could ever have attained to any other way; It will make even exact Compositions easier to him, and him much readier and freer at them. But great care must be used by him, before he suffers himself to speak with the liberty here aimed at in publick; he must try himself at smaller Excursions from his fixed Thoughts, especially in the Applicatory part, where Flame and Life are more necessary, and where a mistaken Word, or an unfinished Period are less observed, and sooner forgiven, than in the Explanatory part, where Men ought to speak more severely. And as one succeeds in some short Excursions, he may give himself a farther Scope; and so by a long practice, he will at last arrive at so great an easiness, both in thinking and speaking, that a very little Meditation will serve to lay open a Text to him, with all the Matter that belongs to it, together with the order in which it ought to be both explained and applied. And when a Man has attained to a tolerable degree in this, he is then the *Master* of his Business; he is *Master* also of

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much Time, and of many noble Thoughts, and Schemes that will arise out of them.

This I shall prosecute no further; for if this opening of it, does not excite the Reader to follow it a little, no enlargements I can offer upon it, will work upon him. But to return to *Preaching*, and so conclude this Chapter. He that intends truly to *preach the Gospel*, and not himself; he that is more concerned to do good to others, than to raise his own Fame, or to procure a following to himself, and that makes this the measure of all his Meditations and Sermons, that he may put things in the best Light, and recommend them with the most advantage to his People; that reads the Scriptures much, and meditates often upon them; that prays earnestly to God for direction in his Labours, and for a Blessing upon them; that directs his chief Endeavours to the most important, and most indispensable, as well as the most undeniable Duties of Religion; and chiefly to the inward Reformation of his Hearers Hearts, which will certainly draw all other lesser Matters after it; and that does not spend his Time, nor his Zeal, upon lesser or disputable Points; this Man so made, and so moulded, cannot miscarry in his Work: He will certainly succeed to some degree, *The Word spoken by him, shall not return again.* He shall have his *Crown*, and his *Reward* from his *Labours*: And to say all that can be said, in one Word, with *St. Paul*, *He shall both save himself, and them that hear him.*

### The CONCLUSION.

I have now gone over all that seemed to me most important upon this Head, *of the Pastoral Care*, with as much Shortness and Clearness as I could: so now I am to conclude. The *Discourse* may justly seem imperfect, since I say nothing concerning the Duties incumbent on *Bishops*. But I will upon this occasion say very little on that Head. The Post I am in, gives me a Right to teach *Priests* and *Deacons* their *Duty*; therefore I thought, that without any great Presumption, I might venture on it: but I have been too few Years in the *higher Order*, to take upon me to teach them, from whom I shall ever be ready to learn. This is certain, that since, as was formerly said, the *Inferiour Orders* subsist in the *Superiour*, *Bishops* must still be under all the Obligations of *Priests*:  
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They are then, take the Matter at lowest, bound to live, to labour, and to preach as well as they. But why are they raised to a higher Rank of Dignity and Order, an encrease of Authority, and an Extent of Cure? And why have Christian Princes and States, given them great Revenues, and an Accession of Secular Honours? All this must certainly import their Obligation to labour more eminently, and to lay themselves out more entirely in the *Work of the Gospel*: in which, if the greatest Encouragements and Assistances, the highest Dignities and Priviledges, belong to them, then according to our Saviour's Example and Decision, *who came not to be ministered unto, but to minister*; and who declared, that *he who is first shall be last, and he who is the greatest must be the Servant of all*; then I say, the higher that any are raised in this Ministry, they ought to lay themselves out the more entirely in it, and labour the more abundantly. And as our Obligations to *Christ* and his *Church*, tie us to a greater Zeal and Diligence, and to a more constant Application of our Care and Thoughts; so the *Secular Supports* of our *Honours* and *Revenues* were given us to enable us to go through with that extent of *Care* and *Jurisdiction* that lies upon us. We are not only *Watchmen* to watch over the *Flock*, but likewise over the *Watchmen* themselves. We keep the *Door* of the *Sanctuary*, and will have much to answer for, if through our Remissness or feeble Easiness, if by trusting the Examination of those we ordain to others, and yielding to Intercession and Importunity, we bring any into the *Service of the Church*, who are not duly qualified for it. In this, we must harden our selves, and become inexorable, if we will not partake in other Mens Sins, and in the Mischiefs that these may bring upon the Church. It is a false Pity, and a cruel Compassion, if we suffer any Considerations to prevail upon us in this Matter, but those which the Gospel directs. The longer that we know them before we ordain them, the more that we sift them, and the greater variety of Trials, through which we make them pass, we do thereby both secure the Quiet of our own Consciences the more, as well as the Dignity of holy Things, and the true *Interest of Religion* and the *Church*: for these two *Interests* must never be separated; they are but *one* and the *same* in themselves; and *what God has joined together, we must never set asunder*.

We must be setting constantly before our *Clergie*, their Obligations to the several Parts of their Duty; we must lay these upon them, when we *institute* or collate them to *Churches*, in the solemnest Manner, and with the weightiest Words we can find. We must then lay the Importance of the Care of Souls before them, and *adjure* them, as they will *answer to God* in the *great Day*, in which we must *appear to witness* against them, that they will seriously consider and observe their *Ordination-Vows*, and that they will apply themselves wholly to that *one Thing*. We must keep an Eye upon them continually; and be applying Reproofs, Exhortations, and Encouragements, as occasion offers: We must enter into all their Concerns, and espouse every Interest of that Part of the Church that is assigned to their *Care*: We must see them as oft as we can, and encourage them to come frequently to us; and must live in all things with them, *as a Father with his Children*. And that every thing we say to stir them up to their *Duty*, may have its due weight, we must take care so to order our selves, that they may evidently see, that we are careful to do our *own*. We must enter into all the Parts of the Worship of God with them; not thinking ourselves too good for any piece of Service that may be done; visiting the Sick, admitting poor and indigent Persons, or such as are troubled in mind, to come to us; Preaching oft, Catechising and Confirming frequently; and living in all things like Men that study to fulfil their *Ministry*, and to do the Work of *Evangelists*.

There has been an Opinion of late, much favoured by some great Men in our Church; that *the Bishop is the sole Pastor of his whole Diocesi*; that the Care of all the Souls is singly in him, and that all the *Incumbents*, in Churches, are only his *Curates* in the different parts of his *Parish*, which was the Ancient Designation of his *Diocesi*. I know there are a great many Passages brought from *Antiquity* to favour this: I will not enter into the Question, no not so far as to give my own Opinion of it. This is certain, that such as are persuaded of it, ought thereby to consider themselves as under very great and strict Obligations, to constant Labour and Diligence; otherwise, it will be thought, that they only favour this Opinion, because it encreases their *Authority*, without considering that necessary Consequence that follows upon it.

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But I will go no further on this Subject, at this time, having said so much only, that I may not seem to fall under that heavy Censure of our Saviour's, with relation to the Scribes and Pharisees, *That they did bind heavy Burdens, and grievous to be born, upon others; and laid them upon Mens Shoulders, when they themselves would not move them with one of their Fingers.* I must leave the whole Matter with my Readers. I have now laid together with great Simplicity what has been the chief Subject of my Thoughts for above *thirty Years*. I was formed to them by a *Bishop* that had the greatest Elevation of Soul, the largest compass of Knowledge, the most mortified and most heavenly Disposition, that I ever yet saw in *Mortal*; that had the greatest Parts as well as Vertues, with the perfectest Humility that I ever saw in Man; and had a *sublime Strain in Preaching*, with so grave a Gesture, and such a Majesty both of Thought, of Language, and of Pronunciation, that I never once saw a wandering Eye where he preached; and have seen whole Assemblies often *melt in Tears* before him; and of whom I can say with great truth, that in a free and frequent Conversation with him, for above two and twenty Years, I never knew him say an *idle Word*, that had not a direct Tendency to *Edification*: and I never once saw him in any other Temper, but that which I wished to be in, in the last Minutes of my Life. For that Pattern which I saw in him, and for that Conversation which I had with him, I know how much I have to answer to God: and though my reflecting on that which I knew in him, gives me just cause of being *deeply humbled* in my self, and before God; yet I feel no more sensible Pleasure in any thing, than in going over in my Thoughts all that I saw and observed in him.

I have also another Reason, that has determined me at this time, to prepare this Discourse, and to offer it to the Publick; from the present posture of our Affairs. We are now brought *very near* the greatest *Crisis* that ever *Church* or *Nation* had. And as on the one Hand, if God should so far punish us for our Sins, for our Contempt of his Gospel, and *Neglect* of our *Duties*, as to deliver us over to the Rage of our Enemies; we have nothing to look for, but a *Persecution* more dreadful than any is in History: So if God hears our Prayers, and gives us a happy Issue out of all those Dangers, with which the Malice of our Enemies threaten us; we have



have in view the greatest Prospect of a blessed and lasting Settlement, that even our Wishes can propose to us. Now nothing can so certainly avert the one, or prepare us to glorify God in it, if he in his Justice and Wisdom should call us to a *Fiery Trial* of our *Faith*, and *Patience*; as the serious minding of our Functions, of our Duties and Obligations, the confessing of our Sins, and the correcting of our Errors. We shall be very unfit to *suffer* for our *Religion*, much less to *die* for it, and very little able to endure the hardships of *Persecution*, if our Consciences are reproaching us all the while, that we have procured these Things to our selves; and that by the ill use of our Prosperity, and other Advantages, we have kindled a Fire to consume us. But as we have good Reason from the present State of Affairs, as well as from the many eminent Deliverances, and happy Providences, which have of late, in so signal a manner, watched over and protected us, to hope that God according to the Riches of his *Mercy*, and for the *Glory* of his *Great Name*, will hear the Prayers that many good Souls offer up, rather than the Cry of those Abominations that are still among us: So nothing can so certainly hasten on the fixing of our Tranquillity, and the compleating our Happiness, as our lying often between the Porch and the Altar, and interceding with God for our People; and our giving our selves wholly to the Ministry of the Word of God, and to Prayer. These being then the surest Means, both to procure and to establish to us, all those great and glorious Things that we pray and hope for; this seemed to me a very proper Time to publish a Discourse of this Nature.

But that which made it an Act of *Obedience*, as well as *Zeal*, was the Authority of my *Most Reverend Metropolitan*; who, I have reason to believe, employs his Time and Thoughts, chiefly to consider what may yet be wanting to give our *Church* a greater Beauty and Perfection; and what are the most proper Means both of purifying and uniting us. To which I thought nothing could so well prepare the way, as the offering to the Publick a plain and full Discourse of the *Pastoral Care*, and of every Thing relating to it. *His Grace* approved of this, and desired me to set about it: Upon these Motives I writ it, with all the Simplicity and Freedom that I thought the Subject required, and sent it to him; by whose particular *Approbation* I publish it, as I writ it at his *Direction*.

There



There is indeed one of my Motives that I have not yet mentioned, and on which I cannot enlarge so fully as I well might. But while we have such an invaluable and unexampled Blessing, in the *Persons* of those *Princes* whom God hath set over us; if all the Considerations which arise out of the Deliverances that God has given us by *their* Means, of the Protection we enjoy under *them*, and of the great hopes we have of *them*: If, I say, all this does not oblige us, to set about the reforming of every Thing that may be amiss or defective among us, to study much, and to labour hard; to lead strict and exemplary Lives, and so to stop the Mouths, and overcome the Prejudices of all that divide from us; this will make us look like a Nation cast off and *forsaken of God*, which is *nigh unto cursing*, and *whose end is burning*. We have reason to conclude, that our present Blessings are the last Essays of God's Goodness to us, and that if we bring forth no Fruit under these, the next Sentence shall be, *Cut it down, why cumbereth it the Ground?* These Things lie heavy on my Thoughts continually, and have all concurred to draw this Treatise from me; which I have writ with all the sincerity of Heart, and purity of Intention, that I should have had, if I had known that I had been to die at the Conclusion of it, and to answer for it to God.

To him I humbly offer it up, together with my most earnest Prayers, That the Design here so imperfectly offered at, may become truly effectual, and have its full Progress and Accomplishment; which whensoever I shall see, I shall then with Joy, say, *Nunc Dimittis, &c.*

F I N I S.

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